

## The Panama Canal:

Labor Force Given No Claim to Fame

u.s. prisons ...

## Havens of Repression



# NATION TIME

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## PCRNA Prez says RETURN TO THE LAND

Story on pg 3

**Dr. Demetri Marshall**

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Through The Eyes of The Camera Page 11

**The People's Center Council (PCC)**

Centerfold

**May 19 – All Roads Lead to Harlem**

International .....pg 2  
The Territory .....pg 3  
Babylon .....pg 5  
Editorial .....pg 7  
On The World Side .....pg 8

Strong Women Coming .....pg 15  
Youth on the Move .....pg 18  
Eye of the Whirlwind .....pg 20  
Freedom Fighters .....Back pg



# The Panama Canal:

## Labor Force Given No Claim to Fame

By Mike Williams

**COX NEWS SERVICE** — Schoolchildren are still taught that the Panama Canal is one of America's greatest achievements, an engineering marvel that signaled the dawn of what historians now call "the American Century." But while American money, determination and engineering prowess led the massive effort, it was the muscle, sinew and blood of thousands of Black West Indian workers that did most of the backbreaking labor.

"They built the canal with picks and shovels and brawn," said Cecil Haynes, 86, who has worked at the canal for 71 years, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. "Many of them died from explosions and slides. It was very dangerous work, but they were hard-working, honest people who loved this canal."

In recent years Haynes has received widespread attention for his remarkable work record at the canal. He started as an office clerk in 1928 at the age of 14, working his way up to inventory specialist in a career that has spanned seven decades. But as proud as

he feels about the photographs on his modest office walls that show him posing with presidents and distinguished officials, Haynes says his greatest desire is for the world to remember the sacrifice and effort put forth by the Black canal builders.

"I want to get respect for the old-time workers," he said. "I'm glad that people are starting to realize the contributions made by those Black people who came here to build the canal, but there's still no monuments to them."

The original effort to build a Panama Canal began in the 1880s under the French, who imported thousands of Jamaican laborers to do the work. Shoddy finances and the deaths of some 20,000 workers due to malaria and yellow fever doomed the French effort. When the Americans took over in 1903, they turned again to the Caribbean for the bulk of the labor force, focusing on Barbados. Still haunted by the horrors of the French effort, the Jamaican government discouraged American recruiters on their island.

For the islanders, the work was hard and dangerous, but provided a tremendous opportunity. For most, the only alternative was seasonal farming labor, which paid as little as a few pennies a day.

"My grandfather came here from Barbados because he wanted a better life," Haynes said. "The salaries were low, but it was a real opportunity." The Black workers earned about 10 cents an hour, and were subjected to the indignities and injustices of the segregation that was standard for the day. American workers were kept in comfortable barracks, were paid in gold and had access to low-cost imported goods, recreational activities and other amenities.

The Black workers mostly lived in shanties or even tents, and were paid in silver. "You had to struggle to get what you got," said Edgar Bruce, 85, a West Indian who worked for three decades at a U.S. military base and whose grandfather helped build the canal.

The dangers of the job were immense. Hundreds of workers died in accidents of all sorts — crushed by

railroad cars, blown up by dynamite, buried in massive earthslides. Others were felled by disease. Of some 5,000 who died during the American effort between 1904 and 1914, about 4,500 were Black West Indians.

Haynes still rides the bus to work, arriving each morning by 5:30 a.m., doing a job he says has been "my whole life." He pulls out a poem written by Juan G. Fagette, another descendant of Black Caribbean canal workers, scanning the lines that pay homage to the Black men who died creating the giant waterway:

"Where are those men Whose naked  
sun-baked backs  
Were bent in making the earth move?  
Whose muscles strained  
To get that form in place? . . .  
Where are those men Whose sweat  
and tears  
The Atlantic and Pacific Ocean drank?  
Whose blood Baptized all the waters  
of the world  
Whose contribution to this day  
Has never been fully praised nor  
recorded?"

# Focus on Religious Tension

**LAGOS, NIGERIA** — A major preoccupation of Nigeria's government seven months into President Olusegun Obasanjo's four-year term is how to keep a firm lid on simmering religious trouble in the West African country.

Religion has always been a sensitive issue in Nigeria, with its more than 108 million people split almost evenly between Muslims and non-Muslims — mostly Christians and followers of traditional African religions.

But relations between Muslims and Christians, the two main religious groups in the country, have become even more delicate since the end of military rule in May 1999 and subsequent moves by some states in the north to implement Sharia, Islamic law.

In October, Zamfara became the first Nigerian state to adopt Sharia — which would allow the amputation of limbs and decapitations for certain offences. Since then, a number of other states in northern Nigeria have begun moves to introduce the Islamic legal system, raising the apprehension of their religious minorities, especially Christians.

The first signs that heightened religious tensions were edging towards violence emerged in mid-December in the central town of Ilorin, when Muslim militants attacked and vandalized 18 Christian churches.

Ilorin, capital of Kwara State, sits on the boundary between the predominantly Muslim north and the mainly Christian south and has large populations of adherents of both faiths. In

many ways the town illustrates the proximity of the two religions in Nigeria, and debate has been heated among followers of the different faiths there on whether it is appropriate or not to introduce Sharia in Kwara.

The government's response was to dispatch to the city officials of the Committee on Inter-religious Harmony, set up by Obasanjo when he took office to help douse religious tension. Members include Sultan Mohammed Maccido of Sokoto, the spiritual head of the country's Muslims, and Reverend Sunday Mbang, president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

"We condemn in strong terms your unbecoming actions of destroying churches," Maccido told Ilorin residents during the 28 December visit. "It is very disheartening and totally against all Islamic teachings and practice."

Maccido rode in the same car with Mbang during the tour of the town, a display of religious harmony which helped reduce the simmering tension in Ilorin.

But religious tension remains near the surface, not only in Ilorin but also in several other parts of the country. Possible flashpoints include the northern state of Kaduna, which has a large Christian population, and states of the ethnic Yoruba southwest, where large Christian and Muslim populations live side by side.

Muslim Northerners ruled Nigeria for most of its years as an independent state and they were often accused by their southern Christian critics of har-

boring an agenda for Islamic domination of the whole country.

Matters nearly got out of hand when in 1986, under military president Ibrahim Babangida, Nigeria quietly became a member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), which links countries with predominantly Muslim populations. The move was greeted with a chorus of protests by Christian leaders, who pointed out and insisted on the secularity of the Nigerian state. As a result, no government official was willing to confirm the country's membership of the OIC at the time.

When northern political leaders decided it was time to give up the most important political position in the land, they gave their support to Obasanjo, a southern Christian politically unloved by some within his ethnic group, the Yoruba, for his reputation as a nationalist during his years as a military ruler in the 1970s.

However, since taking office, Obasanjo has been accused by some Northerners of favoring his kinsmen and seeking to dismantle the northern power structure. Powerful political elements in the north have, in turn, been accused by some of the president's supporters of fomenting the ethnic and religious crises, threatening the new democracy begun in May last after more than 15 years of military rule.

"The question is why talk of Sharia at this time? Why didn't we talk when (former de facto president) Sani Abacha was there, when Babangida

was there? They were all Muslims and would have supported them," Chris Abashiya, a leader of CAN, said in Kaduna State at a news conference on 6 January.

He said his suspicion was that some politicians in the north wanted to cause trouble now that they were no longer in power and a Christian had taken over as the country's president. "The net result is that we are going to find ourselves in chaos. It will not work," Abashiya said.

On 6 January, Obasanjo himself took the opportunity of the end of Ramadan, the Muslim fasting month, to urge respect for the separation of the state and religion as required by the constitution.

"The path of separation of state and religion which was chosen for our country from the beginning is still enshrined in its supreme law, the 1999 Constitution," he said in a special message to Nigerians. "Given the multiplicity of religions and sects in the country, the wisdom of this choice cannot be doubted...".

**Free  
the Land!**





"...before the world, i do solemnly and freely pledge that i will perform my duty...faithfully, and in accordance with the New Afrikan Creed, so that when my tour of duty is over, i will leave the strength and efficacy of my office...greater by far than when i took this oath. FREE THE LAND!"

With those words, the newly elected officers of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika accepted the mandate of their fellow citizens and began their term of service in the PGRNA. In accordance with the CODE OF UMOJA, the officers were sworn in at a People's Center Council meeting on November 13, 1999 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Newly elected officers are Demetri Marshall, President; Ukali Mwendo, Vice President; District Judge, Akilah M. Ali and Herman Ferguson, District Representatives, Demetri Marshall (Port Gibson, MS), Sekou Owusu (Brooklyn, NY), Herman Ferguson (Queens, NY), Gene Vincent (Miami, FL), Carlton "Bashiri" White (Baton Rouge, LA), K.X.A. Rashid (Miami, FL), Akilah M. Ali (Lafayette, LA), Imari Obadele (Baton Rouge, LA), Iyalua Ferguson (Queens, NY), Walter Dawson, Baton Rouge, LA)

At the meeting, reports were received from the former Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs and the Chairman of the Land Fund Committee, Osei Nkansaa. The status of the land fund and progress towards building a power center in Kush District is a major priority of the PGRNA and continues to be a major concern of members of the People's Center Committee (PCC).

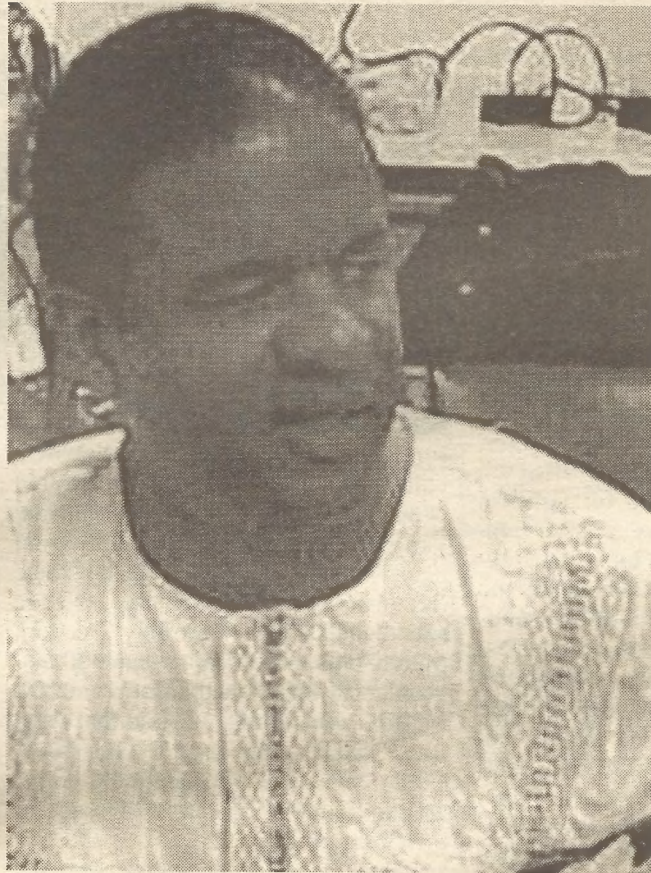
Outgoing President Kwame Afoh addressed the body, giving a brief history of the Provisional Government and summary and analysis of the issues and tasks faced by his government.

Sister Iyalua Ferguson was elected new Chairperson of the PCC and the business of the new PCC began. Sister Akilah M. Ali was approved as the new Minister of Justice; Brother Imari Obadele is the new Minister of Information. Other ministers of government nominated by President Marshall were not present, and the body voted to withhold confirmation until it had an opportunity to interview them. The nominations are: Coltrane Chimurenga, Minister of Defense; Baba Hannibal Afrik, Minister of the Interior. President Marshall indicated that he would be making other nominations at the next PCC meeting.

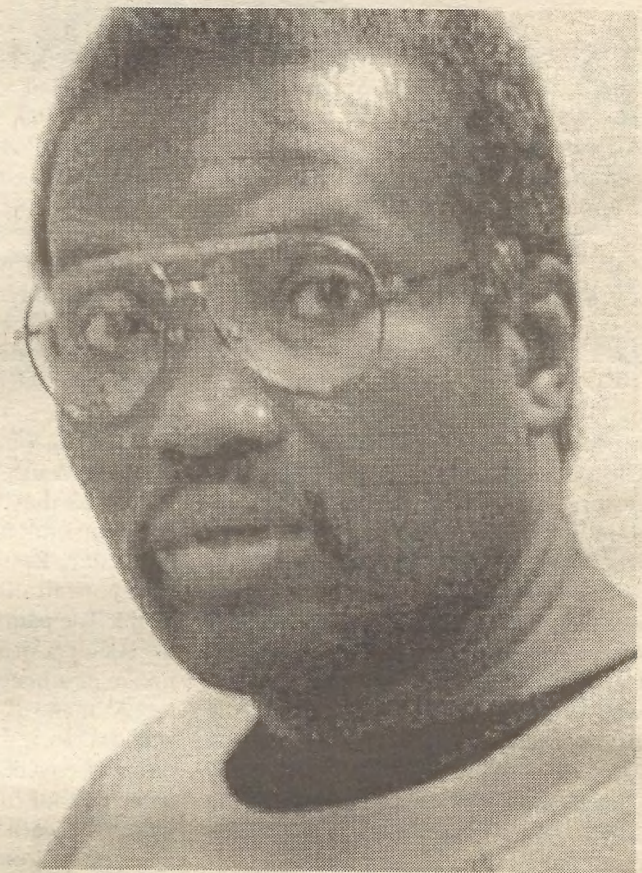
President Marshall, in his maiden speech to the PCC, presented his vision for the PGRNA. He said that while rural areas are paramount, the national strategy must encompass the north, south and urban areas. Intense concentration must be focused on youth as well as on economic development. "We must build the Kush District. It is the heart of our nation," President Marshall told the Council.

Seriousness and intense concentration marked this first PCC meeting of the new administration. Gene Vincent, representative from Florida and the youngest member of the PCC, brought the concerns as well as the vigor of young New Afrikans to propel forward the work of the Provisional Government of New Afrika.

# National Elections for PGRNA



Dr. Demetri Marshall, President – PGRNA



Ukali Mwendo, First Vice-President – PGRNA

## From the President of the PGRNA. Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish...

New Afrikan Creed, #10: I will give my life, if that is necessary. I will give my time, my mind, my strength and my wealth because this IS necessary.

Dearest New Afrikan Sisters and Brothers,

It is with the greatest of humility and anticipation, that i write you all for the first time as President of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika.

The administrative branch of the Provisional Government (the People's Revolutionary Leadership Council or PRLC) has already formed a solid base. The elected members are Vice President Kalongi Olusegun of Banneker Village (Washington DC), Vice President Ukali Mwendo of New Orleans, People's Center Council (PCC) Chair Iyalua Ferguson of New York and myself 'in the Kush District (Mississippi). The PCC approved, appointed members of the PRLC are Minister of Information Dr. Imari Obadele, Kush District (Louisiana) and Minister of Justice Akilah Ali, Kush District (Louisiana). Hannibal Afrik, Kush District (Mississippi), formerly of Chicago, is the Acting Minister of Interior. We also have an Acting Minister of Defense.

As the new PRLC of the PGRNA We pledge to you a New Afrikan Style of Work, This means commitment, accountability and appropriate follow through on all aspects of our work as conscious citizens and members of the PRLC.

As the new PRLC of the Provisional Government takes office, We must first take a roll call. Now it is time for us to take a conscientious inventory of the Sisters and Brothers We have classified as conscious citizens.

With conscious citizenship comes a great responsibility. The conscious citizen is the mind, body, soul and voice of our great nation. This is the Sister and Brother that has not succumbed to the insanity of u.s. imperialism and its relentless oppression of our people and our nation. The conscious citizen is the Sister and Brother that has chosen to fight and resist the genocidal onslaught that is devastating our people and our nation.

The first responsibility of the conscious citizen is to make sure that the representatives of our Provisional Government display a New Afrikan Style of Work. To not demand accountability from our representatives is to accept our defeat. For a conscious New Afrikan to accept mediocrity from the PG is unacceptable. We, as conscious citizens and members of the PRLC, will vigorously investigate all allegations of unacceptable behavior alleged against any representative or worker of the Provisional Government.

As conscious citizens We must individually decide how We will support and work to assist the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) and the Provisional Government (PG). Whether as PG worker, tax paying supporter, New Afrikan security force, etc., We must be accountable and reflect a New Afrikan Style of Work. A conscious citizen is defined by his or her work and support of the NAIM.

The PGRNA will always be dedicated to being patient and uplifting with the deaf, dumb and blind, as is stated in the New Afrikan Creed. But We need conscious New Afrikans to continue to support the NAIM and the PG. As We make a new beginning for the PG, We need those that have not been active to clarify their work and support of the NAIM. We have only love for our Sisters and Brothers. But We must be clear. We must know who is with us and what roles they are willing to play.

This will allow the PG to move forward and more efficiently attend to our primary task, the freedom of the New Afrikan nation.

**Free the Land!**

**P.S. Start making plans now New Afrikan Nation Day 2000!!!**

**To be held March 31 – April 02, 2000 in Jackson, Kush District (Mississippi).**



# Rev. Albert B. Cleage JR., Passes On

Reverend Albert B. Cleage, Jr., founder of the Shrine of the Black Madonna, the largest Pan-African Church in America and pioneer and pre-eminent scholar of Black Liberation Theology, died, Sunday, February 20, in Calhoun Falls, SC. He was 88.

Known to many as Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman, Rev. Cleage proclaimed the African heritage of Jesus in the early 1950s, a generation before the concept of a Black Christ became widely accepted. Throughout his ministry, Rev. Cleage challenged the Black church to restore Jesus to his historical context—a religious revolutionary seeking to free Israel from Roman oppression. In 1953, after a bitter debate over his involvement in social issues, Rev. Cleage and 300 members left St. Marks Congregational Church and formed what would become the Shrines of the Black Madonna of the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church. Rev. Cleage set forth new directions for the Black church, mobilizing the Black community in voter registration, collective economics and building political and institutional power.

Rev. Cleage's groundbreaking works, *The Black Messiah*, published

in 1968 and *Black Christian Nationalism*, released in 1972, took the theology of Black liberation worldwide. With more than 1 million copies sold and reprints in 14 languages, Rev. Cleage's works have become required reading in the most prestigious seminaries and form the basis for studies in black theology. During the 1950s and 60s, *The Shrine of the Black Madonna* became the spiritual home of hundreds involved in the Civil Rights movement. Rev. Cleage's fiery messages and acute analysis inspired people from New York to Watts, from Selma to South Africa as they struggled for political and economic freedom. On Easter Sunday, 1967, Rev. Cleage unveiled a 20-foot portrait of a Black Madonna and Child. The painting provided thousands of Black Christians with their first image of a historically black Jesus.

A man of national respect and acclaim, Rev. Cleage received his theological education from Oberlin Graduate School of Theology in 1943, where he earned the equivalent of a doctorate. From his early years, Rev. Cleage was active in nearly every aspect of black community's struggle for self-determination. He organized boycotts to gain managerial positions

**"He propped me up on my weak and leaning side. We used to call him the master teacher" Ernest Johnson, a former bishop at the Shrine of the Black Madonna.**

for Black people in local businesses, edited and published the *Illustrated News* and organized the Freedom Now Party, in Michigan, becoming the first black man to run for governor since Reconstruction. In 1963, Rev. Cleage spearheaded the Detroit Freedom March, which drew more than 300,000 people and shared the platform with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Also that year, Rev. Cleage organized the Grassroots Conference where Malcolm X delivered his famous speech, "Message to the Grassroots."

Under Rev. Cleage's leadership, the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church continued to grow, establishing Shrines of the Black Madonna Cultural Center

and Bookstore and Technological Centers in Atlanta in 1975 and Houston in 1978. In addition, he established the Black Slate, Inc., a non-profit, public relations advertising group that selects and supports candidates for public office who best represent the interests of the black community. In 1999, the Shrine of the Black Madonna announced the acquisition of Beulah Land, a 2,400 acre farm and retreat center in South Carolina. With that purchase, the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church became the largest land-owning black institution in the world. It was there, on Beulah Land, that Rev. Cleage passed peacefully in his sleep.

## New Afrikan Attorney Under Attack

**GREENVILLE, SC** — Attorney Efia Nwangaza is currently facing a criminal contempt charge by the Office of the Attorney General of the state of South Carolina for boldly and consistently standing for justice for victims of police abuse. Efia is accused of jury tampering for distributing flyers alerting Black motorists being brought before the court on warrantless stops that Driving while Black or Brown was not a crime. She is further cited for marching on the courthouse and jail in the October 22nd National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation event in Greenville, South Carolina. The central theme of the march was support for the Waffle House 2—two Black men jailed in the death of a sheriff's deputy. The community believes the deputy died by friendly fire.

The South Carolina Attorney General is persecuting Attorney Nwangaza for opposing the abuses the criminal justice system inflicts on the people. She is being threatened with criminal charges for alerting people in the vicinity of the court house to the systematic way police targeted Black motorists (Driving while Black or Brown—DWB) in August of 1999. And for expressing the strongly felt convictions of the Black community and others in Greenville that the Waffle House 2 are being framed.

The actions of the Attorney General, in effect, demonstrate that those who stand up for justice for victims of

police abuse face possible criminal proceedings in South Carolina.

The October 22nd Coalition notes that the chief prosecutor of Greenville County, Bob Ariail, who originated the criminal complaint against Ms Nwangaza, has himself made public statements on the case of the Waffle House 2. On December 2nd, he is quoted in *The Greenville News* as saying he has a solid death penalty case against one of the Waffle House 2. The Coalition asks, "Is the chief prosecutor being investigated for jury tampering too? Wouldn't his statements have the effect of impacting the opinions of people who are potential jurors in this adjudicative proceeding pending before the court?" The Coalition further asks, "Does the Office of the Attorney General in South Carolina consider public statements intended to aid in railroad-ing the Waffle House 2 allowable while statements aimed at alerting the public to a frame-up in progress are grounds for criminal investigations?"

As for the matter of Driving While Black (DWB), studies from New York to California have shown that this is a widespread practice of law enforcement agencies.

The fact that the court room in Greenville on the day in question was filled with Black motorists taken into custody following warrantless stops shows that racist traffic stops are also frequently done by law enforcement in that state. Raising the specter of jury tampering charges on Ms Nwangaza is an attempt to defend this heinous prac-

tice from exposure and resistance.

This attempt to silence Ms Nwangaza is viewed as trying to force attorneys to either support abuse by the criminal justice system or at least to

stand by silently while the abuse takes place. It is to Attorney Nwangaza's credit that she has refused to do either and continues to oppose these injustices.



**Activist Attorney Efia Nwangaza**



# Havens of Repression

By Charles Brooks

**NEW YORK** — Rather than have an impact on crime, the u.s. prison system has instead become havens of repression and blatant human rights violations. Consider the intolerable conditions attributed to overcrowded public prisons, criminalizing and incarcerating black women and youth, inadequate medical healthcare, the exploitation of prison labor by corporate america, physical and mental abuse, and excessive disciplinary sanctions reflecting just a few examples of the brutal and inhumane treatment regularly afforded to prisoners.

According to the Justice Policy

cost of incarceration at about \$20,000 a year, culminating in a total cost for 1999 at \$39 billion which is expected to grow to \$41 billion by the end of 2000.

Marc Mauer, assistant director of the Washington, DC-based Sentencing Project tells NATION TIME, "Much of the rise in incarceration stems from get tough movement on behalf of legislators and politicians. The war on Drugs during the 1980s has produced an incarcerated population where 25% of them are there for drug offenses. Mandatory sentencing is part of that 'get tough' movement responsible for these escalating incarceration rates."

*"they're kept in SHUs that you can only describe as a little box that you can barely stretch out from head to toe ..."*

Institute (JPI), 1999 ended with approximately 1,983,084 prisoners, including 1,222,155 non-violent offenders, locked down nationwide. Their estimates indicate that the nation's incarcerated population will reach two million prisoners by mid-February 2000.

JPI recently released their study, "The Punishing Decade: Prison and Jail Estimates at the Millennium," which reveals that more people were imprisoned during the 1990s than in any other decade.

Nearly 700,000 prisoners were incarcerated during the 1990s compared to almost 425,000 prisoners during the 1980s. The study quantifies the

The study also cites the disproportionate rate of imprisonment for Blacks; in 1997, Blacks made up only 13% of the population but nearly half of the 1.2 million state and federal prisoners (548,900). Mauer explains, "racial profiling shows quite clearly that blacks are more likely to get more police attention, whether it's by stopping them on the street or on the highways, more than whites."

The study provides yet another opportunity to scrutinize the factors responsible for the increasing rates of incarceration; mandatory minimums, the role which racism plays on all levels of the criminal justice system, aggressive policing tactics and eco-

nomics. As a result, america's prison industrial complex is commonly viewed by prison and community activists as an apparatus of both social control and economic policy.

As an economic strategy, it has led to the rapid construction and privatization of prisons that has culminated in a \$30 to \$40 billion business. Racism plays a dominant role when the prison system is used as social control, evident in both the disproportionate confinement of Blacks as well as political imprisonment.

Sentenced to unusually long sentences on the flimsiest of evidence, political prisoners are usually afforded the harshest conditions.

They're routinely sent to a "special housing unit" (SHU) because of minor disciplinary infractions, which is set apart from the general population.

Attorney Gilda Sherrod-Ali says, "they're kept in SHUs that you can only describe as a little box that you can barely stretch out from head to toe. And the prisoners have only limited recreation in an enclosed area." She says that political prisoners are subjected to intensive prison surveillance measures where the attorney/client correspondence are "accidentally opened" or phone calls are being monitored.

Many of the political prisoners were imprisoned in their early 20s and are now middle-aged men in need of medical attention. But as political prisoners they're made to suffer and tolerate their various ailments.

Attorney Carl Franklin says prisons in general don't adequately serve the

medical needs of regular prisoners but its more so with political prisoners. "It's a common problem that's been going on for years," says Franklin.

He cited the health cases of Robert Seth Hayes and Albert "Nuh" Washington, who complained of various health ailments for several years and were only recently treated. Hayes was subsequently diagnosed with diabetes and Washington was diagnosed with cancer, given only months to live.

"Over the years political prisoners have not been treated immediately and their ailments were left to linger and fester," explained Franklin.

Transferring political prisoners reflects yet another manifestation of physical and mental harassment, where the prisoner is often moved far away from family and loved ones while being denied contact with their attorneys.

"It's a common occurrence. They regularly move them around every year or so and the families and attorneys are the last to know," says Franklin. Ali adds, "They deliberately move your client to another facility and disrupt the entire process. As an attorney, you have to find your client as well as their legal materials."

Political prisoners were once organizers and activists and to move them around from one facility to another, is a thinly veiled attempt to impede on their activism behind the walls.

## Attica Settlement Reached

By Bro. Zayid Muhammad

**NEW YORK** - Tuesday, January 4th, may have marked the beginning of the end of one of the longest prison-related legal battles in history — the battle over Attica.

Federal judge Michael Telesca announced that the State of New York had agreed to a settlement for the survivors of the retaking of that prison by force and for the brutal reprisals they faced in its aftermath.

The Attica Rebellion was a watershed event for the prison justice movement in this country and for social change in general. On September 9, 1971, inmates at the Attica Correctional Facility took control of that prison by taking several guards and civilian workers hostage. Although no one was injured in the takeover, and even though the inmates demands were quite modest in retrospect — the hiring of more minority guards, more educational opportunities, better medical care and food, less crowded conditions and an end to

arbitrary beatings and abuse by prison authorities — Nelson Rockefeller, who was then governor of New York with obvious presidential aspirations, ordered the retaking of the prison militarily.

So just a few days later on September 13th, after attracting nationwide attention, and proving themselves reasonably restrained and ready to negotiate, the inmates found themselves under siege by state troopers storming the facility with tear gas and indiscriminate volleys of lethal automatic weapon fire.

When the smoke cleared, 32 prisoners and eleven guards were killed. Another 80 people, mostly prisoners, but also including civilian personnel, were also seriously wounded.

State troopers then proceeded to torture the prisoners horribly. They stripped them naked, beat them savagely and even burned some. It was the brutality of both the retaking of the facility and the spectacle torture reprisals in its

aftermath that lay at the heart of this case, now in its 25th year of litigation.

People's attorney Liz Fink initiated the lawsuit on behalf of the late Akil Al Jundi, a New Afrikan freedom fighter feted in this paper upon his death in 1997, Frank 'Big Black' Smith and over 1200 other inmates in 1974. She pressed the case to this point of closure and summed up the victory in this way: "No amount of money will bring back people's legs; no amount of money will bring back the people who died. We think it's a respectful settlement. It serves what we have been fighting for — to hold law enforcement accountable."

The settlement calls for \$8 million to be given to the surviving inmates and \$4 million for their attorney's legal fees. Hearings will soon be convened to determine how much each survivor will receive. It is likely that each would receive approximately \$20,000.

When film footage revealed the spectacle of the reprisals after the

retaking of the prison, it reminded many in the Black nation of scenes right out of plantation slavery. "History has recorded the brutality of what happened at Attica," explained Danny Meyers, another Attica attorney. "Most often, things like this that happen in prison are never heard about," he finished.

The spectacle of this rebellion and its brutal repression came on the heels of the assassination of the legendary prison organizer George Jackson on August 21, 1971. It galvanized forces all over the country to secure the kinds of reforms that the 'Attica Brothers,' as they came to be known, had asked for to begin with.

Ironically, at the dawn of the year 2000, a life-sucking profit-making monster of social repression has emerged in the u. s. national order, known as 'the prison industrial complex,' which has evaporated many of these very reforms and now has 2 million people, predominantly Black and Latino men, behind bars.



# Communal Clashes Major Concern in Nigeria

**LAGOS, NIGERIA** — For many Lagos residents, there is nothing abnormal about fearing the Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC), blamed for most of the communal clashes that have swept the Nigerian southwest since Olusegun Obasanjo took office as elected president in May 1999.

In the past fortnight, a faction of the organization has been linked to two episodes of violence which appear to illustrate its reputation as both a self-appointed scourge to crime and a threat to civil order in southwestern Nigeria, which includes Lagos.

On 5 January, armed militants said to belong to the OPC invaded Mushin, a Lagos slum, on a mission to flush out criminals, particularly armed robbers and drug dealers. After two days of fighting at least 20 people had died — most of them set ablaze with car tires around their necks — and over 40 houses had been burnt down, according to local newspaper reports.

Barely a week later, action had shifted to the Bariga suburb of Lagos, where OPC militants invaded a police station to free a comrade held for alleged robbery, kidnaped and killed the station's commander and drenched two other policemen with acid.

Founded in 1994 by medical doctor and politician Frederick Fasehun "to protect the interests" of the some 20 million Yorubas in Nigeria, the OPC's final goal is the creation of Oduduwa (Oodua) Republic, named after the legendary ancestor of the Yoruba, one of Nigeria's main ethnic group.

Its creation was a response to the annulment of the 1993 presidential elections by the northern-dominated military. A Yoruba businessman-politician, Moshood Abiola, had been poised to win the polls.

Former military dictator Sani Abacha, who seized power in the confusion following the annulment, jailed Abiola for laying claim to the presidency and went on to suppress all opposition to his rule. The OPC was among emergent groups that were beginning to offer a more militant challenge to Abacha's rule when he suddenly died in June 1998.

The OPC boycotted efforts made after Abacha's death to end more than 15 years of military rule in the country of over 108 million people, and focused on its avowed objective of ethnic separatism.

However, cracks emerged when a faction led by one Ganiyu Adams accused Fasehun of selling out to Obasanjo and began to engage in increasingly militant action towards achieving separatist aims, even as it sought with messianic zeal to rid Yorubaland of criminals.

"We didn't build OPC for this type of violence," Fasehun, whose hospital in Lagos was recently partly burnt down by his factional rivals, told IRIN. "We built the OPC to protect the interest of the Yoruba and do justice to everybody in this country."

He accused Adams, on whose head the police have put a price, of seeking to unleash death and chaos on the country.

The more militant OPC faction has been linked to a long list of violent incidents, including clashes in Lagos with Hausas, a Muslim ethnic group from the north, and with Ijaws from the southeast. It has also been associated with disturbances in the southwestern towns of Shagamu and Ilesha. In December, Lagos State Governor Bola Tinubu narrowly escaped death when an OPC gang fired on him near his official residence.

"The recent events have shown clearly that we are moving towards a state of anarchy," Tinubu told journalists after the latest violence. He pledged efforts to check the trend.

Obasanjo has accused Tinubu of ineptitude in curtailing the violence and threatened Lagos with a state of emergency. This has sparked a bitter political row, with Tinubu accusing the ruling People's Democratic Party of coveting the country's biggest city, home to more than eight million people and controlled by his Alliance for Democracy party.

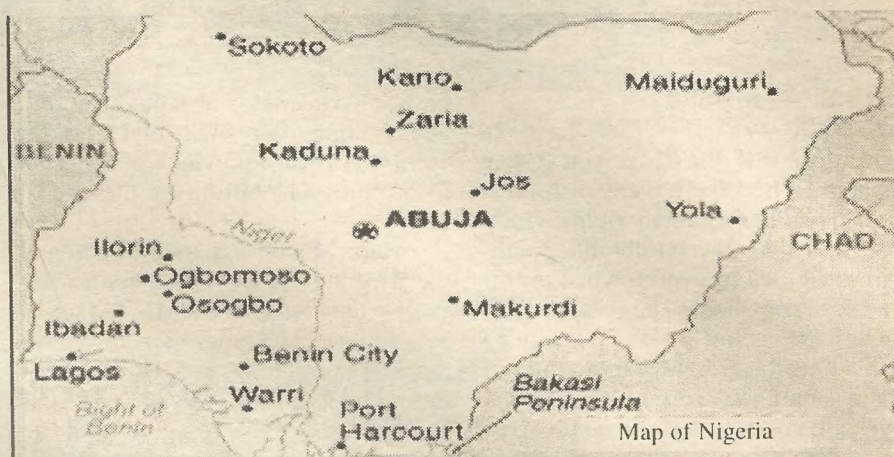
Despite Fasehun's claim that more than three million Yorubas are registered members of the OPC, the group's aims are not seen as necessarily representative of Yoruba aspirations. Its militancy has often put Yorubas in other regions in danger, provoking retaliation as occurred in the northern city of Kano and Port Harcourt in the south-east.

One consequence of the activities of the OPC has been to heighten ethnic tension in Nigeria, which has over 200 distinct ethnic groups. There is now growing evidence of the emergence of ethnic militias in different parts of the country, including the volatile Niger Delta, where minorities accuse the government and oil companies of depriving them of their share of proceeds from the region's oil wealth.

Disturbed by the trend, the government has warned it will no longer tolerate such violence and that it will take firm action to contain future outbreaks.

"This administration now has more than its fair share of acts of lawlessness being perpetrated in some parts of the country under the guise of protecting ethnic interests," Vice President Atiku Abubakar said earlier this month.

For many Nigerians, the recent events bear a worrying resemblance to those which led to the first coup, staged in 1966, six years after independence from Britain. In that year, disturbances in the southwest led to emergency rule and the appointment of a special administrator for the region by the central government, supplanting the elected government which was led by an opposition party. As the political crisis persisted, the military struck and swept the first post-independence government from power. Nigeria then continued its slide towards the 1967-1970 Biafra war in which more than one million people died as the southeast fought unsuccessfully to secede from the rest of the country.



## INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

### Voters Reject Draft Constitution

**JOHANNESBURG** — The Zimbabwean electorate has overwhelmingly rejected a draft constitution proposed by the government of President Robert Mugabe.

An official of the government-appointed Constitutional Committee (CC) told IRIN on Tuesday that 55 percent of the electorate voted "No" to the proposed draft, against 45 percent who voted "Yes". An estimated one million people went to the polls on Saturday and Sunday.

The draft constitution would have consolidated presidential powers and allowed the government to requisition white-owned land for redistribution without compensation.

Nick Ndebele of Zimrights told IRIN the results presented an interesting phenomenon to the Zimbabwean political landscape.

"Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF is understandably shocked by this as they expected rural people to vote 'Yes'. This could mean that the majority of Zimbabweans, including the rural poor, are fed up with the ruling party and are now clamoring for change," Ndebele said.

Ndebele added that Zimrights was concerned at the possibility of a violent campaign in the run-up to the elections in April. "Both the ruling party and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) will now be squaring up to each other to woo the voters to their parties," he said. "This might result in an outbreak of violent clashes between the supporters of the two parties."

Ndebele said it was possible ZANU-PF might delay the parliamentary elections by six months to allow the party time to recover from the "No" vote shock as well as to prepare its election machinery for a propaganda assault.

"The 1979 constitution does allow for a six-month delay in the holding of elections, which the ruling party might be tempted to invoke. But this might backfire because at the same time, it would give the opposition more time to galvanize its support base," he said.

### Feds concerned about marines in Peru

The Brazilian Federal Police has expressed concern about the presence of U.S. marines in the city of Iquitos, 150 kilometers from the Brazilian border. Nearly 100 marines have been sent to the city to open a military school allegedly aimed at controlling drug trafficking in the area. The U.S. military has already invested U.S. \$78 million in the school. The Federal

Police believe the school pressures Latin American countries to militarize the campaign against drugs. They also believe that this is a way for the United States to impose their control over the region.

### Germany Clinches Nazi Labor Deal

**BERLIN** — Germany has reached a deal to compensate surviving slave laborers from the Nazi era, ending months of tortuous negotiations, a government spokesman said on Tuesday.

The settlement, which the spokesman said was less than 10 billion marks (\$5.14 billion), averts the threat of legal action hanging over many of Germany's top firms and should end an issue that had threatened U.S.-German relations.

The spokesman for chief German government negotiator Otto Lambsdorff told Reuters that agreement had been reached with victims' representatives on the amount of compensation to be paid out. "I can confirm an agreement has been reached," the spokesman for Lambsdorff said. But when asked if the settlement amount was 10 billion marks, the official said: "That's too high."

Munich-based lawyer Michael Witt said the settlement had been agreed at 10 billion marks and that further payments had been agreed for other Nazi victims and to cover costs.

U.S. Deputy Treasury Secretary Stuart Eizenstat, Lambsdorff's counterpart in the talks acting on behalf of the surviving victims, finalized the deal earlier on Tuesday morning.

### Mugabe Wants Greater Action

**JOHANNESBURG** — Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe said on Monday that Western governments have not done enough to resolve the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Addressing a news conference in Harare after talks with DRC President Laurent-Desire Kabila, he called on Western powers to condemn the governments of Rwanda and Uganda backing DRC rebels. Mugabe said he would attend a 24 January meeting called by the UN Security Council to discuss international efforts to end the conflict.

Kabila, who arrived in Zimbabwe on Sunday, held talks with Mugabe on the DRC ceasefire signed in Lusaka last August, a presidential spokesman told IRIN on Monday. Kabila said he would decide later whether he would attend the Security Council meeting.





# NATIONAL TIME

THE VOICE OF THE NEW AFRIKAN LIBERATION FRONT

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## Guest Editorial

**Remarks by Martin Luther King, III President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference International Committee to Save the Life of Mumia Abu-Jamal**  
January 12, 2000

(Highlights from a speech delivered at the National Press Club in Washington, DC on January 12, 2000.)

Conscience compels me to unite with Nelson Mandela, Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbelton, Elected Representatives of the European Parliament, the Congressional Black Caucus, Amnesty International, Harry Belafonte, Paul Newman, Ossie Davis, Danny Glover, Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu, and millions of others around the globe to fight

for the life of our Brother in "the Struggle," Mumia Abu-Jamal.

SCLC's commitment to justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal, dates back over a decade. First of all, at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference we are unequivocally opposed to capital punishment. The conductors of the evil system of injustice made Abu Jamal a political prisoner and now they have planned his execution. As "conscious-raising members" of the global society, we cannot afford to sit back and let an innocent man die. The world must know that the Judge purposely withheld "crucial evidence" from Abu-Jamal's case. Experts say this evidence alone could have brought an acquittal.

We can no longer afford to allow bias in the criminal justice system to continue. We must stand by Abu-Jamal's side just as we stood by the side of Nelson Mandela.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was brutally murdered because he spoke out against social injustices. Today, almost thirty-three years after he was killed, we must unite together in the name of justice to stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a young man who was respected in the community for reporting stories about economic and social injustices. We must come together as a family in the spirit of my father who said, "The arc of the universe is long but is bent towards justice," and never

give up until we save the life of our Brother, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

America should know that the world is watching to see if she will do the right thing. Under the system of government dictated by our constitution, the judicial system is the final repository of public power. It should be held inviolate from racism and other prejudices which plague our society. We demand that all those with the power to intervene, do so now in the name of justice; . . . do so now in the name of all that America holds, claims to hold, true and fair; . . . do so now in the name of all those who have already died to force America to live up to its motto of liberty and justice for all. . .

## The NCBL on the Nathaniel Abraham Case

NATHANIEL ABRAHAM IS A CHILD WHO SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH THE CRIME OF MURDER

(Those who contributed to this article are: Gilda Sherrod-Ali, Co-chair of NCBL Criminal Justice Section; John Wesley Davis, NCBL/DC; and Roger S. Wareham, NCBL UN Representative.)

Nathaniel Abraham, a thirteen year old [New Afrikan] child was convicted of second degree murder in Pontiac, Michigan after being tried as an adult under a new Michigan statute which not only allows a child of any age to be tried as an adult, but to be sentenced as one. This travesty of justice began with the prosecuting authorities in Michigan assuming that an eleven year old child (he was eleven at the time of the shooting) with the mental capacity of a six year old, could make an informed decision, the same way that an adult would make an informed decision, to take the life of another. In making such an erroneous assumption, the prosecution made the conscious decision to ignore the legal doctrine of "diminished capacity"—a doctrine based upon the time tested belief that one whose mental ability to think clearly, and rationally and reflect fully upon the consequences of his/her actions is totally compromised due to mental illness, retardation or age, cannot be held legally responsible for those actions.

Based upon its decision not to recognize Nathaniel Abraham's diminished capacity, the state of Michigan (where prosecutors decide who to charge, what

charges to bring, and whether a child should be tried as a juvenile or an adult) charged Nathaniel Abraham as an adult with the crime of first degree murder. Therefore, when he was found guilty of second degree murder, it was as an adult, and he is subject to an adult sentence: Life in Prison.

Here was a confused and neglected child who should never have been charged with ANY crime, certainly not the crime of murder. But because he was black, male, young, and the epitome of what white America fears and hates, the usual prosecutorial tendency to bring the most stringent charges when it comes to bringing charges against black and Latino men, ran amuck.

This case is a manifestation of everything that is wrong with the criminal justice system in the United States, and the juvenile justice sector in particular. It delineates how the treatment of black children under juvenile justice in the United States thoroughly violates the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, an international instrument that the United States (only one of two countries in the world) has failed to ratify.

All of the available statistical information shows that black and Latino children are over represented in the juvenile justice system and incarcerated in far greater numbers than any other race in virtually every state in the United States. In addition, black and Latino youth are much more likely to face multiple charges in the same indictment or information, and more likely to be charged

with a serious charge in circumstances where a juvenile of another race may face lesser charges for the same behavior. All of the available data shows that while black youth make up just 15% of the population between the ages of 10-17, they account for 30% of the youths arrested, 40% of those held in custody in juvenile facilities, 50% of all cases transferred from juvenile courts to adult criminal courts, and 46% of the juveniles in correctional institutions.

This disparity in the treatment of black and Latino youth in the criminal systems around the country mirror the disparate and discriminatory treatment meted out to adult black and Latino men and women who ordinarily face extreme and harsh criminal charges. The most glaring example of discriminatory overcharging of black men and women is the 100 to one crack/powder cocaine disparity in the federal sentencing guidelines. Blacks are most likely to have access to the cheaper and more readily available crack cocaine; whereas, whites are more likely to be caught with powder cocaine.

Overcharging black men, women and children in criminal indictments in a highly suspect and discriminatory manner is another manifestation of racism/white supremacy. It is further evidence of the vestiges of slavery that continue to haunt people of African descent in this country, and must be challenged on every front. It must surely be challenged and brought to a halt in cases such as this, where a black child is subject to being placed in confinement in the bow-

els of the criminal industrial complex at the age of eleven to work as free or sub-standard labor for the rest of his natural life. How different is this from the enslavement of our ancestors? We at the National Conference of Black Lawyers urge the Judge in this case to do the only right thing: Sentence Nathaniel Abraham as a juvenile in this case. And if he feels the necessity to impose a sentence that includes any period of confinement, place him in a juvenile facility for a minimum period, where he can receive any educational and therapeutic assistance he may need. One precious child's life has been lost in this tragic incident; another child should not be made the sacrificial lamb to show how "tough" some politicians can be on crime.

We also urge federal and state legislatures to revisit and rethink the "get tough on crime" laws that have brought about the criminalization of a generation. With all of the recent statistics showing that all crime, but particularly violent juvenile crime, is lower than it has been since 1988, what is the reasoning behind the enactment of these kinds of statutes if it is not to gain the confidence and the vote of certain segments of the population in order to get reelected?

Most importantly, we urge all black people everywhere to take up this very important issue. To use your voice and your vote to challenge laws that lead to such devastating discriminatory results, and to challenge those legislators who will not seek to change these increasingly draconian laws.

## Principles of Unity of the New Afrikan Liberation Front

**1. Land...**The primary objective of the NALF is self-determination through a national liberation struggle for land (territory within the historic southeastern Black Belt), independence, and reparations.

**2. Who is the Enemy...**For over 400 years our nation has been enslaved, first by the European settlers in North America, and currently, we are colonized by the political descendants of those settlers, represented by the government of the United States of America. Our collective enemy is the United States government that oppresses and exploits our people through the systems of capitalist imperialism, sexist oppression and racial colonialism.

**3. Self defense/Armed struggle...**We recognize the right to self-defense, as well as the

right to armed struggle for self-determination.

**4. Prisoners of War, Political Prisoners, and Exiles...**We seek amnesty for POWs, PPs and Exiles as a non-negotiable self-determination demand.

**5. Social Liberation...**The fight against racial, class, sexist and social inequality is fundamental to New Afrikan self-determination. Our people are colonized based on the eurocentric myth of white supremacy and its ideology of racism. In prisons, work places and through calculated unemployment, our people's labor is exploited and millions of us are kept poor and economically dependent on capitalism. New Afrikan women are sexually exploited, controlled through violence and socialized to inferior or submissive status by tradition, law and religion based

on the ideology of patriarchy/male supremacy.

**6. Unity and autonomy of organizations/Methods of resolving contradictions...**We accept the leadership and discipline of the NALF as determined by a consensus of its membership organizations. The ideological integrity and autonomy of each organization within the NALF is mutually respected. We will practice constructive criticism and self-criticism for the purpose of resolving contradictions and internal differences.

**7. A New Afrikan Consciousness Movement...**We recognize that culture is a weapon of resistance. In that light we are committed to building a movement to develop the National consciousness, culture and Spiritual connectedness of the New Afrikan people. Cultural revo-

lution to create the New Afrikan woman and man is a vital aspect of our fight to be liberated from white supremacy, sexist oppression and capitalism.

**8. Our Cultural Symbols...**We recognize the Red, Black, and Green Flag, the New Afrikan Creed, the New Afrikan Declaration of Independence and the Code of Umoja as the unifying historical, and cultural symbols of our National Liberation Front and our independence movement.

The working theoretical expression of the New Afrikan Liberation Front will be the Three Phase Theory for New Afrikan Liberation.



# ON THE WORLD SIDE

## NEWS OF AFRICANS AT HOME AND ABROAD

Ahati Toure, Associate Editor of *NATION TIME*, has been working with Jeremiah Adem Afuh in his campaign to accede to the presidency of the Republic of Cameroon. Brother Afuh asserts that he was elected by the Council of Elders as the President-Designate to become head of state. This was not a European-sponsored election, but one based on Afrikan tradition. Below is Ahati's report on his work with the "Cameroon project."

As you can imagine, I've been very busy on the Cameroon project. I've been to the Continent twice already regarding the logistics of this thing, meetings with some of the key representatives of the movement on that side. Once in Accra in July and in Cameroon in December. Recently, we sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General regarding the human rights situation in Cameroon. That letter, dated 6 January, arrived 10 January. \*(See excerpt below.)

Our reports from inside the country indicate that Annan led a UN delegation of 50 to investigate the charges, including our assertion that Jerry was elected by the Council of Elders as the President-Designate to become head of state. We have not retreated from that position because it is the truth. Annan reportedly arrived in Yaounde (the capital) on the 20th and left last Wednesday, leaving the head of the delegation in the hands of Boutros Boutros Gali to continue the investigation. Further, sources indicate that a delegation from the British Commonwealth and the Francophonie organization were there as well, along with representatives of the OAU.

Apparently this is the first time a group from Cameroon has been able to evoke this kind of response. From what I hear, there has been nothing comparable to this in previous experience.

Anyway, the struggle has been quite difficult, in part because of the reluctance of Afrikans on this side to give support. On the other hand, those Afrikans in this country who have the means of gathering the money to give us the financial support that we need and who have been willing to do so have been subject to sometimes quite intense harassment by the agents of this government. Mostly, we have seen potential sources dry up through some rather vigorous intimidation or attempts simply to waste our time and gather information that could be used to imperil supporters in Cameroon.

Our experience has shown that the high level Negroes in this country are the slaves of the power structure to a degree I had not understood before — except perhaps theoretically. They can only act based on permission to do so from the white man. Their power both comes from and is doled out to them by the white man.

Still, we press on. In fact, we have some other things in the works, which with some financial support, will permit us to conclude this phase and assume power. That is what we have been working on all this time. But the means of accomplishing this involves

Afrikan tradition. Most Afrikans on this side do not understand Afrikan tradition and, being materialists, are skeptical of it. In addition, this is obviously a clandestine movement. No one on the other side is going to openly declare himself or herself a part of this movement because that will mean certain imprisonment and/or death.

Jerry's election came after the democratic opposition had been silenced after the 1992 and 1997 local, parliamentary, and presidential elections and after other candidates put forward by the Council failed in their missions (one killed, one imprisoned, another otherwise neutralized). Among other reasons, he was chosen because he was stationed outside of Cameroon, therefore his possibilities of survival while the movement went underground were greater. As a result, the kinds of proof that most people are looking for — and perhaps rightly so — were unavailable. But we have reached a stage now where we are increasingly moving into a more public mode. At an earlier stage we didn't have the capability of doing that. Our task was to accomplish what we needed in a more clandestine manner.

If anything, what will prove our seriousness and genuineness is our consistency and perseverance. Our message remains the same and we continue to say the same thing wherever we are. To me I am in this because this is an opportunity to be a part of a Pan Afrikan liberation struggle in which we can throw off the shackles of European domination once and for all.

The Pan Afrikanism we envision is

not simply continental unification. It also involves global Pan Afrikanism, the belief that Afrikans stolen from the Continent have a birthright to Afrika, equal ownership with those who are still there. We see Cameroon as a base for a liberation struggle that will include all Afrikans throughout the world. But we need financial and political support to complete our process of moving to power and we need it once we assume power because the U.S. is opposed to our movement.

In fact, once we assume power, the Americans will attack the legitimacy of our movement with, among other claims, that it is not legitimate because it did not go through the European-styled electoral process. The election, however, is based on the authority and the legitimacy of the traditional rulers, who gave him the authority to rule over them (through the rites, initiations and rituals he had to undergo and for which we are trying to get the last bit of money to complete), and thus, over the country.

This is the same process through which the previous two heads of state went. Ahidjo, after undergoing the Council's election process, went on to contest for the national presidential elections in 1960, against two other candidates, one backed and financed by the British and the other by the French. He prevailed.

Biya, his successor, was not elected to the presidency through the European-styled electoral process. He was announced by Ahidjo as the successor. This is because Ahidjo wanted to put in place the minister of territorial admin-

istration, Bouba Bello, as his successor, a man from his area. This was contrary to the constitution, which stipulated that under the circumstances, the speaker of the House of the National Assembly would succeed temporarily to the presidency until elections were called.

The Council backed the election of Biya, prime minister at the time, over Bouba Bello for the succession. Biya came to power without presidential elections. Moreover, the French took the election by the Council so seriously that they, through El Aquitaine, the French oil company, financed the rituals, rites and initiations necessary for Biya to assume power to the tune of some \$2 million. That is why the French so thoroughly control the country now.

Our efforts have been financed largely through private contributions. We are near the end of this process, but this is why it has been taking so damn long. This is what we are working to complete. When we complete it, Biya will retire and announce Jerry as the successor.

Further, once we assume power, we are convinced that we have what it takes to succeed, to win, and to defeat the European, to get him off our backs permanently. That's why I am involved and that's why I'll be seeing this thing through to the end. We are struggling and praying that the end will be very soon now because we really don't have a lot of time to waste. We are, in fact, running out of time.

### \*Excerpt from Letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Dear Secretary-General Annan:

I write to you as the President-designate of the Republic of Cameroon to urge your investigation and intervention in the crisis that is threatening to burst forth into fratricidal bloodshed in my country. Elected by the Council of Elders, which is composed of the nation's 200 traditional rulers and other dignitaries, after the failed presidential electoral process that obtained both in 1992 and again in 1997, I have been authorized to effect a peaceful transition to democracy and economic prosperity for the people of the Republic of Cameroon. To complete this process, the support of the United Nations on behalf of the efforts of the people of Cameroon and their representatives to effect a democratic means of determining their own political and economic destiny is crucial and indispensable. The crisis now in Cameroon demands immediate attention and action.

It is important for you to understand that in the Republic of Cameroon the Council of Elders has acted as the Electoral College in the election of the previous two presidents — both the first president, Amadou Ahidjo, and the soon-to-be-retiring successor Paul Biya. It is important, further, to underscore that election by the Council of Elders to the office of head of state is the fundamental process of obtaining political legitimacy in Cameroon....



# Political Prisoners Dinner Tribute

By Charles Brooks

**NEW YORK** — The Malcolm X Commemoration Committee (MXCC) held its fourth annual dinner tribute for the families of political prisoners from the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The tribute presents an opportunity to consider the struggle and sacrifice of not only the prisoners themselves but their families as well. "These types of events are important and should be more prominent so that more people would know the hardships on the families as well as the conditions of the political prisoners because they're held under harsh conditions.

"But in the wake of the pivotal role which Puerto Rican elected officials gave to their own Puerto Rican political prisoners, securing their release, this year's tribute calls for pressuring Black elected officials to do the same for their political prisoners. Isn't it about time to bring our political prisoners home?", asks Herman Ferguson who serves as MXCC's Chairman.

Ferguson explained that they invited the entire Black and Latino Caucus of the NY State Legislature to the dinner to show their support for the families of these political prisoners. The only representative to attend was State Senator Larry Seabrook. "I was horrified at the excuses they came up with not to come out and show their support for the families," says Ferguson. Seabrook tells NATION TIME, "I think that one of the things that we need to do as black elected officials, is to have a meeting with the families and also with the Department of Corrections and see what can be done. Some of these individuals have been in jail for 25, 30 years, so it's time that we have some sort of dialogue on what can be done."

All throughout the afternoon tribute, the support and encouragement for the political prisoners and their families was quite evident. The dinner was well attended by the community as well as various formations of the New Afrikan Liberation Front. The December 12th Movement, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Black Men Against Crack, Patrice Lumumba Coalition and the Philadelphia chapter of the NALF were well represented, as well as the New Black Panther Party. While the Mistress of Ceremonies, Sis. Jean Reynolds, charmed the gathering with her quick wit, Bro. Zayid Muhammad delivered the libations in stirring fashion.

The cultural part of the program was performed by; Dhoruba Majid, who recited a poem/song; Sis. Akosua Williams performed "Strange Fruit" and "I Wish I Knew How It Feels to be Free;" and Black Nationalist poet George Edward Tait recited his epic poem, "The Black Brigade".

**"There is a moral obligation to fight for freedom for political prisoners. To let the fight perish is immoral,"**



**Family Members of Bashir Hameed, Abdul Majid, Sundiata Acoli. At far right — State Senator Larry Seabrook. At front is young Dhoruba Majid.**

The speakers were Herman Ferguson, Ishakamussa Barashango and Khalid Abdul-Muhammad, leader of the New Black Panther Party. They each articulated the importance and the necessity to elevate the struggle to secure the freedom for Black political prisoners. They pointed to the need of greater involvement from the Black community, including its black elected officials.

Herman Ferguson reminded the audience that these men have been imprisoned since their 20s because of the political positions they took to struggle against police brutality, drugs, inadequate education and housing. They are now middle-aged men. "They've been locked up for far too long for crimes they didn't commit," says Ferguson.

Brother Barashango gave a dynamic lecture that intertwined Black theology, Black liberation, Black Nationalism and Black history, to define the essence of freedom. He cited several biblical and spiritual references to emphasize his point of utilizing moral, intellectual and physical means to secure freedom for political prisoners. "There is a moral obligation to fight for freedom for political prisoners. To let the fight perish is immoral," says Minister Barashango.

Dr. Khalid Muhammad explained that freedom is a natural force that cannot be disrupted, while drawing strong analogies to the natural birth of a child. "Freedom is a law of nature, and justice is deeply rooted in the natural order of

things," says Muhammad. He addressed the mothers of political prisoners who sat in the front row and acknowledged their sacrifice. "You gave birth to a warrior, a messiah. Your womb has produced a strong child who was unafraid. Nobody knows of the pain you've seen. The many nights you cried while you valiantly tried to make ends meet," says Muhammad.

He criticized the Congressional



**Sister Akosua Williams honored the families with her beautiful voice**

Black Caucus for their role in passing House Resolution 254, which sought to return Sis. Assata Shakur to New Jersey to complete a life sentence. "Our political prisoners are languishing in the hell hole of the white man's jails and prisons. We must free all our political prisoners," says Muhammad. "Revolution is the only solution to free political prisoners."

The families of Abdul Majid, Bashir Hameed, Sundiata Acoli, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, and Mumia Abu-Jamal, were honored and given a plaque with Tait's, Black Brigade, poem superimposed on it. A delicious buffet dinner capped a warm and moving affair.

## Message From Marilyn Buck

Greetings to all gathered here to honor the families of the Prisoners of War. I send you my love and solidarity.

Like all the pp's and pow's, I am thinking of Nuh Washington at this time. The Nuh I know is not only a truly steadfast soldier in the struggle for national liberation and justice, he is a good, decent man who reflects the strength, humanity and aspirations of that larger family of Africans descendants. He with his humility and diligence reflects the kind of citizen that the New Afrikan nation will be built on when it gains independence.

Our brother Nuh has suffered and continues to suffer. Would that he were free! But no matter where he draws his last breath, he stands as a solid oak tree that has left seeds of hope and the future planted around him — like all the New Afrikan POW's.

**FORWARD EVER!**

**BACKWARD NEVER!**

**CARRY ON THE**

**TRADITION**



# A Life in the Balance —

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR RETRIAL FOR MUMIA

**Source: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, NEW YORK CITY** — Amnesty International today called for a new trial in the case of Mumia Abu Jamal on the basis that his original trial was deeply flawed.

"This is not about an issue affecting the life of just one man. This is about justice -- which affects us all. And justice, in this case, can only be served by a new trial," Amnesty International said.

After many years of monitoring the case and an exhaustive review of the original documents, Amnesty International has concluded that the proceedings under which Mumia Abu-Jamal was tried, convicted and sentenced to death fail to reach the minimum international standards for fair trials.

"Amnesty International has chosen this moment to publish the results of their painstaking review of the case because Abu-Jamal's life and the fairness of the judicial system are now, more than ever, in the balance," the organization said.

Without a new trial, the federal courts are Mumia Abu-Jamal's final opportunity to have many of the troubling issues in his case addressed.

However, the 1996 Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act severely limit the federal courts' ability to guarantee a defendants' rights.

Amnesty International fears the act has increased the number of executions that were in violation of international laws and standards governing the use of the death penalty.

The organization is also alarmed that the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police Officers is actively campaigning for the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal. "Police officers and their representatives should be impartial enforcers of the law. Amnesty International understands the anguish officers must feel when a fellow officer dies in the line of duty but their attempt to pressure the judicial system to execute Mumia Abu-Jamal is inappropriate," the organization stressed.

Abu-Jamal's case illustrates broader problems in the judicial system, particularly those that involve the administration of the death penalty.

"Given the contradictory and incomplete evidence in the trial transcript, Amnesty International cannot take a position on Abu-Jamal's guilt or innocence," Amnesty International

said. "In calling for a new trial we are not ignoring the pain of the relatives and colleagues of Officer Daniel Faulkner, for whom we have the greatest sympathy.

"Nevertheless, Mumia Abu-Jamal's inadequate legal representation at his 1982 trial, the fact that the judge appeared more concerned with expediting the trial than with ensuring justice, the politicisation of the judicial process, and the possible bias of the appeal courts has lead Amnesty International to conclude that only a new and fair trial could prevent the execution of a man who has not been proved guilty in a fair trial," Amnesty International stressed.

The prosecution of Mumia Abu-Jamal was built upon three pillars:

- a. the testimony of eyewitnesses;
- b. ballistics evidence; and
- c. an alleged confession by the accused.

After a thorough study of original trial documents, Amnesty International has determined that the veracity of each of these three pillars is in sufficient doubt to make a new trial essential.

### Key concerns

— The three prosecution eyewitnesses substantively altered their description of what they saw between their original statements to police and their trial testimony.

-- The witnesses were confused and unclear about the height of the shooter, what clothes he was wearing, in which hand he held the gun, and whether he ran away from the scene.

-- The alleged confession, reportedly crucial to the jury's decision and sentencing, was first reported more than two months after the shooting.

-- The alleged confession directly contradicted the contemporaneous notes of one of the alleged witnesses to the confession (a police officer) that "the negro male made no comments." This evidence was not put before the jury.

-- There is also evidence that witnesses were offered inducements to alter their testimony in favor of the prosecution's version of events. This evidence was not put before the jury.

-- Lack of adequate ballistic tests to determine whether Abu-Jamal's gun

please see A LIFE on page 22

## New Afrikan Pioneer Feted With Advent of New Year

**By 'little Red'**

**NEW YORK** — There was no champagne belching or balldropping as the year 2000 crept in at New York's Afrikan Poetry Theatre.

Instead, a steeled circle of proud conscious people, young and old, committing themselves to the future of Afrikan humanity, banded themselves together to be "watchful" and ready to expose and resist the institutional mischiefmaking of those forces who stand between us taking our own destiny into our own hands.

They called this special gathering 'Harare 2000.' 'Harare' is an Afrikan word which means 'vigil.' But according to Menelik Harris, one of the conceptualizers and organizers of the event, 'harare' more specifically means "I am watching you." He related that there was a time hundreds of years ago when a contingent of Europeans arrived on Afrikan shores, and upon their meeting the ruler of the land they rested on, they were met with the greeting 'harare.' Naturally, the strange-smelling visitors asked "what does 'harare' mean, sir?" The king responded with a stern but hearty smile and answered "it means that I am watching you!"

If only more had done so.

So just as that ruler was rightfully "watchful" of his strange new visitors, so is it necessary now that, within the ranks of our people, at the advent of this incredible transition, there be a

core who is vigilantly "watchful," challenging our people to keep their eyes on the prize of Afrikan redemption.

The event included children reading from the sacred texts of their ancestors, a candlelighting ceremony for Imani, the seventh and foundation principle of Kwanzaa, a strong spoken word presentation by youth-activist Ariel Nickens, the reclaiming of the Black National Anthem which turns 100 in February by young singer Ayanna Inniss, a special spirited address by Dr. Leonard Jeffries, and much more.

One of the centerpieces of the evening's activities, and of special interest to NATION TIME readers, was a birthday and life tribute to our publisher, New Afrikan pioneer Herman Ferguson who regally turned 79 on December 31st when the evening began.

The tribute began with the elder being seated in a specially kinte-draped chair and treated to 'funga alafia,' a royal welcome dance, where he was individually greeted by everyone in the house and draped with gifts of recognition.

Harlem's poet-laureate of Afrikan nationalism George Edward Tait then feted Baba Ferguson, proudly recalling how he encountered the "fiery" Queens-based educator 40 years ago and how that encounter helped prepare him to take the life path of nationalism. Brother Tait then launched into his insurgent epic poem 'The Black Brigade.'

Bro. Zayid Muhammad, press officer of the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee, told how proud he was to have been "drafted" by Ferguson into that New Afrikan formation.

Then, given the task of detailing Ferguson's biography, Bro. Zayid launched into the litany that comprises the elder's living legacy of struggle and nation-building. — a legacy that includes protesting for construction jobs for Black workers in the building of Rochdale village; the chairing of the education committee of Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity; his seeking to further implement Malcolm's teaching at the grassroots level after the assassination, through the Black Brotherhood Improvement Association and by actually training people in community self-defense through the Jamaica Rifle Association; proudly being one of the founders of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika; being targeted by COINTELPRO and framed for conspiring to commit murder; ultimately being forced into exile for 19 years!

In exile in Guyana, where he used the name Paul Abrams, Baba Ferguson continued to make a difference in that young nation's development. He served as a consultant to their education system. He helped develop the Guyana National Service and was an assistant Director General. He retired from their National Army with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

He returned to the u.s. in 1989 seeking to clear himself once his name

turned up in the COINTELPRO files of Dhoruba Bin-Wahad. He was summarily put in prison to serve his seven year conviction. Upon his release in 1992, he projected himself into the fold of struggle, initiating the formation of the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee and becoming a chief organizer for Jericho '98, the national march for the release of political prisoners in the u.s. He continues to serve as chairman of the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee and administrator of the New Afrikan Liberation Front. He is a District Judge for the Provisional Government and Co-Chairman of the Jericho Movement, the successor formation to the Jericho March.

Bro. Zayid then turned to the audience and asked pointedly:

"Do we want to leave this century without appreciating what we have in this educator, freedom fighter and nationbuilder? Do we want to go into the new age and not have something like this for our children to emulate?"

Sister Iyaluua Ferguson, NATION TIME'S editor-in-chief, and the elder's wife of over 25 years, summed up her husband's proud and vibrant legacy by saying this:

"I can honestly tell you, by my being with this man with the waking of every day, that his life is truly dedicated to the liberation of our people."

Those who know him from all over this country and from his adopted Guyana would most certainly concur.

Free The Land! It's Nation Time!



# Through The Eyes of The Camera

THE NEW AFRIKAN  
DECLARATION OF  
INDEPENDENCE  
11 MARCH 1968

## The New Administration

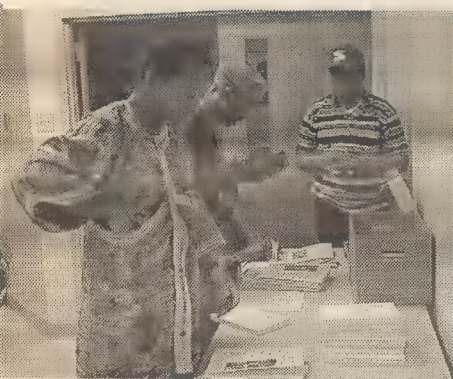


(Seated l to r): Outgoing President Kwame Afah; PCC Chair Iyaluua Ferguson; Minister of Justice Akilah Ali; PCC Vice-Chair Sekou Owusu;  
(Center row l to r) District Rep. (FL) Gene Vincent; Minister of Information Imari Obadele; District Rep. (LA) Walter Dawson;  
District Judge & District Rep. (NY) Herman Ferguson;  
(Back row l to r) Vice- President Ukali Mwendo; President Demetri Marshall; District Rep.(LA) 'Bashiri' White; District Rep. (FL) General Rashid

We, the Black people in america, in consequence of arriving at a knowledge of ourselves as a people with dignity, long deprived of that knowledge; as a consequence of revolting with every decimal of our collective and individual beings against the oppression that for three hundred years has destroyed and broken and warped the bodies and minds and spirits of our people in america, in consequence of our raging desire to be free of this oppression, to destroy this oppression wherever it assaults mankind in the world, and in consequence of our inextinguishable determination to go a different way, to build a new and better world do hereby declare ourselves forever free and independent of the jurisdiction of the united states of america and the obligations which that country's unilateral decision to make our ancestors and ourselves paper citizens placed on us.

We claim no rights from the united states of america other than those rights belonging to human beings anywhere in the world, and these include the right to damages, reparations, due us for the grievous injuries sustained by our ancestors and by ourselves by reason of united states lawlessness.

Ours is a revolution against oppression - our own oppression and that of all people in the world. And it is a revolution for a better life, a better station for mankind, a surer harmony with the forces of life in the universe.



(l to r) Brother Osai, Brother Sekou (center) and Brother Bashiri check out information table during a break.



Brother Osai (l) and President Marshall(r) share a light moment.



President Marshall(l) and Minister of Justice Attorney Akilah Ali (r)



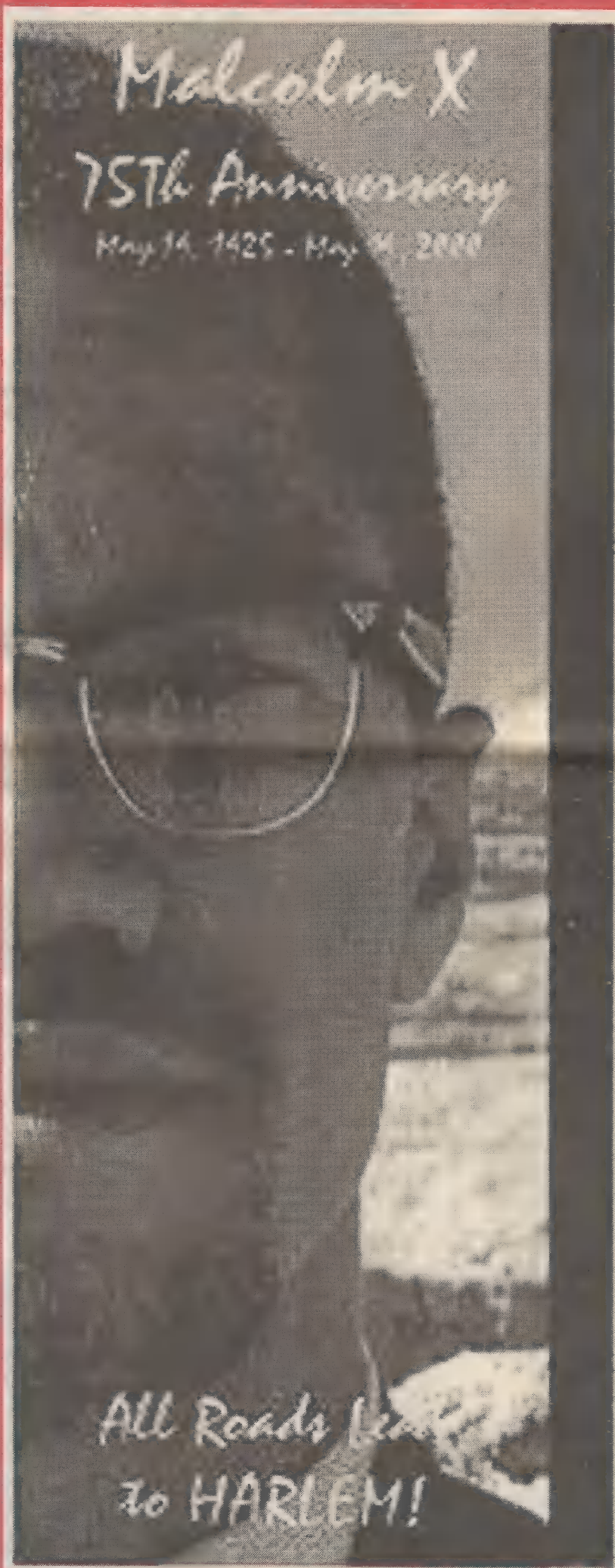
Founding Member of PGRNA & Minister of Information Dr. Imari Obadele



Newly elected PCC Chaiperson, Sister Iyaluua Ferguson presides over her first meeting.



# The Call...



On the 35th Commemoration of the  
assassination of Malcolm X...  
"Don't Mourn, Organize!"

## Malcolm X 75th Anniversary Organizing Meeting

Co-chairs Herman Ferguson & Omowale  
Clay for the Malcolm X, 75th Anniversary  
Committee

To all those who love Malcolm X, come join the inter-  
national celebration of his life, and the correctness of  
his message to Black people.

Join us as we plan the mass pilgrimage to Malcolm's  
grave site, and a Harlem march and political / cultural  
rally which will begin with thousands of Black people  
listening to Malcolm's "Message to the Grassroots".

Let us say to the world, that Malcolm was our hero,  
our manhood, our leader. We cannot go into the 21st  
Century without him.

On the 35th Commemoration of the  
Assassination of Malcolm X...  
"Don't Mourn, Organize!"



**"Malcolm X, A Beacon Light to the New Millennium International  
Pilgrimage to Malcolm's Gravesite- Harlem March & Rally  
To celebrate The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Birth of Malcolm X May 19, 1925  
May 19, 2000**

**A**s the new millennium begins with calls for a "new dawn", a "new beginning", a "new future", all reminiscent of the call for a "new world order," we must ask ourselves whose new dawns, futures, beginnings, etc., do we speak of. Given the widening gap between the rich and the poor, with its accompanying stench of poverty and racism, any declarations for a future millennium must not be left to the rich to define. The toiling masses of our people must define our reality, our hopes, and our vision. For we have a new world to win and an old one to discard.

For certainly we must discard a world where it now takes the 41-bullet murder of a Black man to incur our outrage, and where experimental polio vaccines given to a million Africans in the fifties now point to the cause of AIDS. We must distance ourselves from a place where the World Trade Organization liquidates the national sovereignty of poorer nations in the name of an "honest profit", and our political prisoners continue to be denied freedom and justice.

It is at this juncture in time that we must ask ourselves which Black leader's vision most correctly analyzed our dilemma and whose ideas pointed out how to advance. For those of us willing to look history straight in the eye, and in the words of the great African freedom fighter Amilcar Cabral, "tell no lies, and claim no easy victories", the answer to that question is marked by an "X".

This Black History Month 2000, the first of the new millennium, is a fitting time to mark that "X" on the calendar for May 19, 2000, when we celebrate and honor the 75th Anniversary of the birth of a titan of Black history, Malcolm X. A Black man, whose ideas and practice serve as a "Beacon Light to the New Millennium". A light filled with the ideas of self-determination and self-defense; reparations, economic independence, and land; the battle to free our political prisoners; and to see ourselves as an African people inextricably entwined with liberation of Africa. And, although these ideas didn't belong or necessarily originate with Malcolm alone, he magnified them with his genius and unyielding love for African people.

So this May 19, 2000, all roads will lead to Harlem to demonstrate in the streets of his political birthplace our reaffirmation of the principles of no compromise on the total liberation of African people. In Harlem businesses are being informed that the 10-year tradition of closing to honor Malcolm X's birth on May 19th would this year, in respect, be extended from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Throughout Black History Month the local, national, and international community will be joining and sounding the call to come to Harlem, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Our plans call for a massive pilgrimage to Malcolm's gravesite that morning; and in the afternoon, a March through Harlem; and a political / cultural rally beginning with the playing of Malcolm X's "Message to the Grassroots" to thousands of African people, throughout the streets of Harlem.

Malcolm X, stood on the shoulders of great Black Nationalists and Pan-Africanists, and laid down a vision and analysis for African people which serves as a "Beacon Light to the New Millennium". We shall stand on Malcolm's shoulders, still strong enough and broad enough to take a new generation of African people into the next millennium, fighting for Self-determination, Self-defense, Pan-Africanism and Reparations.

Co-Chairpersons: Herman Ferguson and Omowale Clay

For the Malcolm X, 75th Anniversary Committee

For further information please contact the Malcolm X 75th Anniversary Organizing Committee at., (718) 398-1766, (718) 949-5153,

Fax to (718) 623-1855, (718) 949-3937



# Open Letter from Mabel Carmichael

Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library  
1819 East 71st Street  
Chicago, IL 60649

December 4, 1999

Dear Friend and Supporter of Kwame Ture:

My name is Mabel Carmichael. Two generations of Movement youth know me as "May Charles." Kwame Ture (also known as Stokely Carmichael) is my son. Fifty-eight years ago, I brought Kwame into this world. Thirty nine years ago, I gave him to the people, to the Movement, to the Nonviolent Action Group at Howard University and the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, its parent organization. The rest is history!

It has been one year since Kwame died, and I would like to tell you about some of our activities and achievements this past year. You have perhaps already heard, that Kwame asked me, on his deathbed in the hospital in which he died in Conakry, to build a library so that his books and papers could stay in Africa, in Guinea, and be accessible to future generations of students and youth. I promised him that I would, with God's help, build that library, here in Conakry. We have already started, little by little, and we need and ask for your help!

Over the past few months, our family has traveled to a number of events worldwide, in order to receive posthumous awards and recognition on Kwame's behalf. Some of the highlights include traveling to:

- Washington, DC in May, to accept an honorary Ph.D. from Howard University.

- Banjul, Gambia in June, to accept a posthumous award from the Government of Gambia during the "4th Annual Roots Homecoming Festival."

- Port of Spain, Trinidad in August, to receive recognition by the Emancipation Support Committee at its annual Emancipation Celebration and Pan-African Conference.

- Dublin, Ireland in August, to receive recognition by Sein Fein, and the Irish Republican Movement.

Since our return to Conakry two months ago, with God's blessings, we have completed work on Kwame's gravesite. On November 15th, the date that Kwame died, members of our family who are in Guinea, a number of Kwame's close friends and associates, and 25 students from the Gamal Abdel Nasser University held a "Gravesite Ceremony" in Kwame's honor. The Ambassadors of Libya, Cuba and Palestine were present and offered brief remarks. We then walked to the home of



**Kwame Ture**

El Hajj Thiam and family, one of Kwame's friends for the past thirty years, where a cow was sacrificed and its meat given to the poor, ten Moslem Marabouts read from the Koran, and a sumptuous feast was enjoyed by all. The Sisters and family of President Ahmed Sekou Toure stopped by to pay their respects.

On November 21st, three hundred and seventy days after Kwame's death, we moved into a new house that will serve as the headquarters of the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library, until we can acquire a small piece of land here in Conakry, upon which to build. We are presently very busy organizing and cataloguing the library's core holdings, which include in excess of 1,700 of Kwame's books (126 linear feet), and more than 125 magazine boxes (144 linear feet) of Kwame's personal papers, letters, manuscripts, photographs and recordings.

More than 100 cartons of Kwame's intellectual property await shipment here to Conakry. Dozens of Kwame's former associates in the Non-violent Action Group, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, the Black Panther Party, the Movement to Take Kwame Nkrumah Back to Ghana, the Democratic Party of Guinea and the All-African People's Revolutionary Party have agreed to donate their personal papers and archives to the Library as well.

In addition, Kwame authorized us to file a comprehensive and massive Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request with every level and branch of the united states government. The responses from the federal level and branches are pouring in. We estimate that Kwame's FOIA files will exceed one million pages. They will be housed here in Conakry, and at several of the many universities and libraries in Africa and the world, such as Howard University in Washington, DC and the Gamal Abdul Nasser University in Conakry, with which we hope to affiliate. We know that Kwame is smiling at the work that has been done so far. This is just the beginning!

I am an eighty-year old woman, living on a fixed income. I cannot build

Kwame's institute and library alone! I need and ask for your help, personally, materially and financially.

With your help, and God's, the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library will become the largest non-governmental and non-profit repository in the world, of primary source material by and about Kwame Ture, and the movements and organizations with which he worked. It will also be a Pan-African and International work-study institute that will help educate, nurture and train future generations of students and youth, of scholars and organizers, and inspire them to give service to Africa and other Oppressed Peoples in every corner of the world.

On December 4, 1999, we launched a worldwide campaign to recruit 1,092 members and raise \$364,000 in one year, that's 3 new members and \$1,000 each day. You can help us meet this modest goal, by:

1. Endorsing the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library, and becoming a Charter Member. Membership is open to all progressive and revolutionary governments, institutions, organizations, movements and individuals in Africa and the world; and is free.

2. Making a tax-exempt contribution to our "Building Fund", and to help defray the costs of our "Freedom of Information Act" and "Oral History Documentation" Projects. Supporters are asked to contribute a minimum of \$50 u.s.. Sponsors are asked to contribute a minimum of \$100 u.s.. Sustainers are asked to contribute a minimum of \$250 u.s.. Patrons are asked to contribute a minimum of \$500 u.s.. Other contributions will be greatly appreciated. All donations are tax deductible.

Donating a copy of any material, i.e. correspondence, photographs, audio-visual tapes, films, books, theses, dissertations, posters, buttons, t-shirts, newspaper and magazine articles, or other memorabilia that you might have by or about Kwame Ture, and the movements and organizations with which he worked. All intellectual property rights, copyrights, privacy rights and publicity rights will be fully respected and protected.

Please send your contributions, (financial and material) to the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library, c/o the Black United Fund of Illinois, Inc., 1809 East 71st Street, Chicago, IL 60649. Address all correspondence to the attention of Mr. Henry English, President and CEO of the Black United Front of Illinois, Inc. He also serves as the Treasurer of the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library.

To keep in touch with how we are doing with this recruitment and fund raising campaign, please subscribe to our electronic discussion group for the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library. Just send us an email at: [kwameture-subscribe@eGroups.com](mailto:kwameture-subscribe@eGroups.com).

Thank you in advance for endorsing, becoming a Charter Member, and making your tax-exempt contribution. We ask that you forward this letter to at least ten other people or organizations whom we might have missed, or who you think might be interested in helping us fulfill Kwame's dying request.

Sincerely,

Mabel Carmichael (May Charles)

Chairperson of the Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library

## Black Farmers continued from page 17

nary Consent Decree settling the suit. It promised \$50,000 and a debt write-off to those farmers who could prove that illegal actions had been taken against them by USDA agents. A minimal amount of documentation was supposed to be required.

No other victims have ever had to furnish such proof after a culprit had pleaded guilty to actions. "That can only be seen as sabotage," said Mr. Grant.

"Despite news reports to the contrary, literally tens of thousands of Black farmers are being denied benefits and being told that the discrimination which they allege, did not even occur," said Sam Taylor, BFSA executive director.

The Black farmers gave a laundry list of complaints against the USDA brokered settlement:

Many farmers complained of receiving letters which informed them that they would be receiving more information in a given time. The time had passed and they had heard nothing.

ing.

Many feel the government is playing a game with them. Farmers are not currently getting money.

Too many denials in "Track A."

Need new legal counsel.

Nothing gives us our land back.

Must become more political

Cannot trust either political party.

Most folks being paid are those with no debt, little acreage and very little write off.

The Black farmers will be taking their struggle to the people in the form of voter registration and education in light of the year 2000 elections. "One thing is clear," said Dr. Muhammad, "if Clinton and Gore cannot follow through on giving the Black farmers justice when the government finds itself at fault, then how can we vote for Gore to be president based on more baseless promises. Gore has a few months to fix this mess or go home to Tennessee. The Battle in Seattle continues, our struggle has gone international."





# STRONG WOMEN COMING

by sanovia muhammad

**N**ew Afrikan Creed # 4: I believe in constant struggle for freedom, to end oppression and build a better world. I believe in collective struggle, in fashioning victory in concert with my brothers and sisters.

## An Open Letter to the New Afrikan (Black) Nation

This is to my sisters and brothers who are warriors and lovers of Black people. We write to you from the depth of our soul about an issue that promises to destroy us if we are not diligent in our commitment to end sexist oppression. We are entering the 21st Century with many of our same battles. It is time for us to become more creative in the ways we wage resistance so that victory is guaranteed.

Sexism is alive and well in New Afrikan communities across the Empire. Some of us know this but are not acting on our knowledge and some of us prefer to overlook it so as not to have to act on it. We must encourage all of us to act! We must make it unpopular to be sexist and unpopular to support sexism. Until the tolerance level for the verbal and physical assaults we see perpetuated on our communities is zero — it will continue. Until we are willing to stand up against misogyny in our lives, culture, institutions, etc, it will continue. We must act!

What does any of this mean in terms of our life and death struggles, one may ask? It simply means that our struggles are interconnected and even though some struggles will take priority over others depending on the climate, sexist oppression may not be relegated to the back burner. Violence against Black women is increasing at an alarming rate and is a direct result of being in a society that is built on exploitation, racism and sexism. We must act!

According to bell hooks, sexism is unique, in that it is the only form of domination where the exploited and oppressed live in large numbers intimately with their oppressors or develop their primary love relationships with individuals who dominate and oppress them. Paul Freire states that male domination makes authentic loving relationships between most men and women impossible... In the context of creating a New Afrika that is humanizing and liberatory, sexism must be destroyed. It is incumbent upon conscious brothers and sisters to struggle against sexism wherever we see it and to politically educate the "masses" about the debilitating effect it has on our families and communities. We also have the responsibility of creating tools of resistance to fight this monster.

Sexism lives because misogynists lyrics are still being written, albums are

still being sold and we are still dancing to the same lyrics that dehumanize us with the tired explanation of "i like the beat and i don't really hear the message".

Sexism lives because we still laugh at jokes that are derogatory and objectify us and in many instances, we are the ones telling the jokes and the jokes are on us. Sexism lives because men are still cursing, beating and brutalizing women and we continue to respond with outdated responses like "that's their business", or "some women like to be beat", or "he wouldn't beat her if he didn't love her", or "I have to keep my woman in check!" Please, let's stop the foolishness.

Sexism exists because rape and incest exist and in many cases is swept under the carpet by those who know and those who pretend not to know. Sexism exists because organizations exist that promote male leadership, or keep the "good old boys network" in place even though there are women in leadership. Sexism exists because the concept of man being the "head of the household" is still being promoted whether there is a man there or whether the man there is even contributing to the household. Sexism exists because women still give up any authority they might have to the men in their organizations, the father/husband of the house, or the nearest male relative.

Sexism exists because little girls

are still being taught how to use their bodies to get a man and little boys are still being taught to have sex with "bad girls" but marry "good girls". Sexism exists because religious leaders still use doctrines that promote women as inferior to men.

Sexism exists because peace campaigns call for the end of violence among brothers but don't call for the end of violence against sisters. Sexism exists because sisters still don't trust each other and brothers still play the "center" game. (Brothers being the center and sisters being the margins.) Sexism exists because sisters are still getting pregnant for/by brothers who take no responsibility for their actions. Sexism exists because male-centered language and offensive language is accepted in mainstream America.

The list continues and I am sure that as you read this you are thinking of some examples of your own. (Please write and share your examples with us in the near future.) What is ironic about much of this is that the conscious community is not exempt. Sexism exists because we have been liberal! It will continue to exist as long as we continue to be liberal with our acceptance of backward practices and ideas. We must act!

Unfortunately, there is a tendency in our communities to play the same old games that were used in the 60s to pit sisters and brothers against each

other by labeling the fight against sexism as a fight against men. This fight is not divisive! Brothers and sisters, let us see the struggle for what it really is, a struggle that is necessary and that will liberate us both.

We must struggle on all fronts and there are many. We must struggle against the death penalty; for the release of all our political prisoners and prisoners of war; against the extradition of Assata and other exiles; against human rights abuse and against all the isms that keep us oppressed. Oppression, wherever we find it, even when it's in our face, must be challenged.

Sometimes, it is harder to struggle with each other than with our enemies, but believe us, it will make us stronger. The war will not be won without our collective energies. We are each other's allies. It is not acceptable for us to put our internal contradictions on the back burner, especially those issues that prevent us from working cohesively together. There is no question that we have the power to liberate ourselves.

**Note:** The New Afrikan Women's Taskforce of the New Afrikan Peoples' Organization defines sexist oppression, as it is practiced currently and has been practiced historically, as the subjugation of women by men solely on the basis of gender. It is the belief, and actions stemming from that belief, that women are inferior intellectually, morally, emotionally and spiritually, and therefore are not to be taken seriously or treated with genuine respect.

## The Strong Black Woman is Dead

**AUTHOR UNKNOWN**

On February 15, 2000 at 11:55 p.m., while struggling with the reality of being a human instead of a myth, the strong black woman passed away, without the slightest bit of hoopla. Medical sources say that she died of natural causes, but those who knew and used her know she died from: being silent when she should have been screaming, smiling when she should have been raging, being sick and not wanting anyone to know because her pain might inconvenience them. An overdose of other people clinging on to her when she didn't even have energy for herself.

She died from loving men who didn't love themselves and could only offer her a crippled reflection. She died from raising children alone and for not doing a complete job. She died from the lies her grandmother told her mother and her mother told her about life, men and racism. She died from being sexually abused as a child and having to take that truth everywhere she went every day of her life, exchanging the humiliation for guilt and back again. She died from being battered by someone who claimed to love her and she allowed the battering to go on to show she luvv'd him too.

She died from asphyxiation, coughing up blood from secrets she kept trying to burn away instead of allowing herself the kind of nervous break-down she was entitled to, but only white girls could afford.

She died from being responsible, because she was the last rung on the ladder and there was no one under her she could dump on.

The strong black woman is dead. She died from the multiple births of children she never really wanted but was forced to have by the strangling morality of those around her. She died from being a mother at 15 and a grandmother at 30 and an ancestor at 45. She died from being dragged down and sat upon by un-evolved women posing as sisters. She died from pretending the life she was living was a Kodak moment instead of a 20th century, post-slavery nightmare!!!

She died from tolerating Mr. Pitiful, just to have a man around the house. She died from lack of orgasms because she never learned what made her body happy and no one took the time to teach her and sometimes, when she found arms that were tender, she died because they belonged to the same gender.

She died from sacrificing herself for everybody and everything when what she really wanted to do was be a singer, a dancer, or some magnificent other. She died from lies of omission because she didn't want to bring the black man down. She died from race memories of being snatched and snatched and raped and snatched and sold and snatched and bred and snatched and whipped and snatched and worked to death.

She died from tributes from her counterparts who should have been matching her efforts instead of showering her with dead words and empty songs. She died from myths that would not allow her to show weakness without being chastised by the lazy and hazy.

She died from hiding her real feelings until they became monstrously hard and bitter enough to invade her womb and breasts like angry tumors. She died from always lifting something from heavy boxes to refrigerators.

The strong black woman is dead. She died from the punishments received from being honest about life, racism and men. She died from being



# MOVE ALERT! MOVE ALERT! MOVE ALERT!

We're alertin all MOVE supporters to a very serious and volatile situation developin between the MOVE Organization and a former supporter named John Gilbride, a supervisor at u.s. Airways at the Phila. International Airport. This situation involves a MOVE baby and could lead to another May 13th. Until recently John Gilbride was married to our sister Alberta Africa, the wife of MOVE's founder, John Africa.

Based on MOVE strategy and in accordance with MOVE's belief, Alberta Africa remarried some years after the May 13, 1985, bombing. She married John Gilbride and ultimately had a son with him. After years of marriage to Alberta and close contact with MOVE people, the government who constantly watches and monitors MOVE, saw an opportunity and stepped in and began its campaign to intimidate, coerce and manipulate John Gilbride because of the vulnerability they saw in him immediately following the birth of his son, filling his head with things like "your son could be involved in another 1985, his life could be ruined, you have a responsibility as a father" etc., etc., etc., all the manipulative rhetoric the government has historically been known to feed any MOVE supporter that's vulnerable enough to be misled and fall prey to it. So now, at this time, the MOVE Organization is faced with another Donald Glassey, another weak traitor, only this time, instead of the traitor bein directed at John Africa Himself, the traitor is directin himself at John Africa's wife and her baby.

Everybody, including John Gilbride and officials, knows how MOVE people feel about our babies, we will fight and die if necessary for our babies. MOVE have never and will never put ourselves in a position to take anybody's child away from them and the same holds true for John Gilbride and his son. MOVE doesn't wana take this man's son away from him, the government wants to take his son away from him but he's too blind and too naive to see this. He thinks he can trust this government over the MOVE Organization and that's his mistake. If he wants to be a fool, he can do that, but not at the expense of a baby's life who didn't ask to come here in the first place, whose very life depends on the protection of those whose care he's in.

What this government is attempting to do, is to use a MOVE child in the same way in which they used bogus warrants in 1985 & bogus housing code violations in 1978, as an excuse, or a justification to come at MOVE in order to try to incite a confrontation with MOVE & take down the whole Organization.

In short, this traitor, John Gilbride — who abandoned his son, walked out of his life without so much as a look back, despite all that was done for him by MOVE, and his wife — is a weak person, and was susceptible to government intimidation in order to use him as a pawn, a puppet, & get him to

launch an attack on MOVE. John Gilbride has threatened repeatedly to spill MOVE's blood, the blood of all MOVE people, women, babies, & men.

What we want people to do, is to let the city, and other key individuals & bodies know that the people, the public, are aware of this tactic & will not sit idly by and watch another May 13, 1985 or another August 8, 1978.

This latest attempt at provocation comes at a pivotal point in both the struggles for Mumia & the MOVE 9. This government knows that it is MOVE who is the driving force in both arenas, and this government will stop at nothing to kill Mumia, kill & jail MOVE people, & kill or take away MOVE babies & children. We have seen this before, we MUST NOT let

this happen again.

MOVE is sayin this child is in the care of his mother and MOVE's loyalty and commitment to defend the mother ultimately means protectin and defendin her child too. We're lettin people know exactly what's going on with this situation. For those of you who know that something wrong is getting ready to happen here and you don't want to see another May 13, 1985, MOVE is appealin to you to jump on this situation and stop it before it starts. You can contact the following:

Judge Louise Drenzo Donaldson,  
Camden County Hall of Justice 101  
South Fifth St. Camden, NJ.  
08103-4001

Mayor John Street, Rm. 215 City

Hall Phila., PA. 19107 (FYI-John Street is Black, the second Black mayor of Phila. and we all know what happened under the first Black mayor)

Edward G. Rendell C/O The Democratic National Committee

430 S. Capitol St. Washington, DC. 20 (FYI- Rendell was not only the mayor of Phila. for eight years, prior to that he was the District Attorney for eight years. He is largely responsible for the unjust imprisonment of the MOVE-9, the railroad of Mumia Abu Jamal and the May 13, 1985 bombing and murder of MOVE people. MOVE ain't lettin Rendell off the hook just because he ain't the mayor no more)

On the MOVE!!

## BABYLON BRIEFS

### 14 BLACK COLLEGES TO CLOSE DOWN FOREVER?

A list of Colleges close to closing due to financial problems has been forwarded to NATION TIME.

Here is the list:

1. Allen Univ. (Columbia, SC)
2. Arkansas Baptist College (Little Rock, AK)
3. Barber-Scotia College (Concord, NC)
4. Central State Univ. (Wilberforce, OH)
5. Houston-Tillotson College (Austin, TX)
6. Jarvis Christian College (Hawkins, TX)
7. Lane College (Jackson, TN)
8. Mary Holmes College (West Point, MS)
9. Miles College (Birmingham, AL)
10. Paul Quinn College (Dallas, TX)
11. Southwestern Christian College (Terrell, TX)
12. Texas College (Tyler, TX)
13. Texas Southern Univ. (Houston, TX)
14. Wiley College (Marshall, TX)

### Colleges In 8 States Report Getting Hate Mail

RALEIGH, N.C., — More than a dozen historically black colleges in eight states have received racist hate mail since Christmas. The letters, all containing Fayetteville, N.C., postmarks, began showing up in college offices just after Christmas, said Joe Roy of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala., which tracks hate crimes throughout the country.

"The total destruction of your race is our mission in life," the letters state.

The Law Center had received calls from colleges and organizations in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. "It's the kind of thing you don't want to get overly upset about, given that it's coming from an anonymous source," said the executive assistant to the president at North Carolina's Livingstone College. "But you don't want to ignore it either."

Lincoln University in Oxford, Pa., tightened security on campus after receiving letters containing threats directed at colleges and prominent black figures like Michael Jordan and the Rev. Jesse Jackson. The letters warned that "the war" against blacks would escalate this year. Each letter ended with the words, "The white race will be preserved forever."

The letter to the historically black colleges

was among three versions apparently sent about the same time, Mr. Roy said. The other two versions were sent to the American Jewish Community Center in Georgia and to chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. All three versions were typewritten in capital letters and laced with expletives and derogatory names. Confederate flags were printed at the bottom of two versions, and a swastika was placed at the bottom of the third.

The letter to the colleges used the word "rahowa," a term that means "racial holy war" among a group known as the World Church of the Creator, a successor to the defunct Church of the Creator.

### KC Black Liberation Radio Conference

KCBLR 91.1FM will host a Radio Conference June 16 -18. The purpose of this conference is for people to be able to take home recorded portions of the conference that can help other people anywhere on the globe to start their own Radio Station and to learn more about communication skills.

It is more important for us to learn to communicate in our own communities because the communication we are now getting lack information that is of interest to us in our own communities. We need indepth reporting that concerns us and is the truth about the issues that concerns us, from our own perspective, rather than the perspective of those who oppress us. We need those with technological skills to volunteer to head up workshops on those specific skills.

Those with experience concerning equipment needed to start a Liberation Radio; those with programming skills and reporters/journalists interested in attending the conference and contributing their expertise please respond ASAP and include your area of expertise. You may reach us at 816-333-9814.

### MINORITIES AS GUINEA PIGS

If an experimental vaccine proves to be harmful, chances are that the side effects will hit blacks, Latinos and American Indians hardest.

That's because, as The SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS reports, eight out of 14 childhood vaccines approved since 1990 were tested disproportionately on low-income minorities.

In many cases, the potential risks of the vaccines were not properly described to par-

ents of the children receiving them.

In contrast, a previous MERCURY NEWS article reported that minorities are under-represented in the testing of prescription drugs. The danger of this bias is that it ignores mounting evidence that reactions to some drugs might vary by ethnicity.

Experimental vaccines are especially risky, say many bioethicists, because they are tested on otherwise healthy children. Prescription drugs, on the other hand, are usually tested on sick patients who already need treatment.

### Philadelphia City Council Calls for a Moratorium on Executions

Philadelphia (BRC News) — In an historic move, the Philadelphia City Council today voted 12-4 for a resolution calling for a moratorium on executions in Pennsylvania until a study can be organized to determine if the death penalty is being applied fairly.

The city of Philadelphia is the largest of the eight municipalities in the united states to urge such a halt to executions. Charlottesville, VA, adopted a similar resolution last month. Other municipalities urging a moratorium include New Haven, CT; Mt. Rainer, MD; and Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Durham and Orange County, all in North Carolina.

The Council's action sends a clear message to the Pennsylvania Legislature, which is holding hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee on a moratorium bill on February 22. Moratorium legislation is also under consideration in Oklahoma, Washington, New Jersey, Maryland, and Alabama.

The Philadelphia resolution comes less than 2 weeks after Illinois' Republican Governor George Ryan's announcement of a temporary halt to executions in that state on January 31st.

Philadelphia County has sentenced 125 of the 226 people now on death row in Pennsylvania. Nearly 90% of these Philadelphia prisoners are people of color.

Nationwide, Philadelphia County ranks third in number of prisoners it has sent to death row (123) behind Los Angeles County, CA (156) and Harris County, TX (140), which includes Houston. The city has more people on death row than 37 states.

Pennsylvania has the fourth largest death row in the nation, behind California, Texas, and Florida. Over 90% of the state's death row prisoners were too poor to afford their own attorney. More than two-thirds are people of color.



# The Next Critical Period in the Battle to Save Mumia

**T**he new millennium will usher in some CRUCIAL MONTHS IN THE BATTLE TO SAVE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL. Now more than ever, our energies and efforts in organizing for him must be both more intense and more carefully implemented. The early months of 2000 are those in which we must build and mobilize public expression, during the run-up to a critical ruling by the Federal District court that may happen as early as March.

This court ruling, by Federal District Judge William H. Yohn, Jr., may determine whether or not Mumia receives an evidentiary hearing to reopen the factual record in his case, or whether all future appeals will be based on the court record of the hanging judge Albert Sabo. Judge Sabo found every prosecution witness to be truthful, found every defense witness to be untruthful, and barred the admission of witnesses and documents critical to Mumia's defense.

**THE EVIDENCE MUST BE HEARD.** Judge Yohn must now decide whether or not to exercise his power to review fully all aspects of State court rulings and findings of fact. Yohn has the Constitutional power to do this, even with the constraints imposed on Federal courts by the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. This ruling is crucial, because it determines whether the evidence barred by Pennsylvania courts will ever be heard, and it will determine what record of the facts in this case will be used during all future Federal appeals. If Sabo's record is allowed to stand, then there is no such thing as justice in the United States.

**THE MASS MOVEMENTS DO SHAPE COURT DECISIONS.** Legal pundits would have us believe that everything is decided by judges. But history shows that the courts are greatly affected by voices and actions of the people. This is particularly true in high profile political cases that concentrate

broader issues being fought out in society. Remember how mass actions and the bus boycott forced the courts to rule against segregation in Montgomery. Appeals courts overturned the Chicago 7 convictions and the conviction of Panther leader Huey P. Newton, in part because the whole world was watching. And the movement against the war in Vietnam impelled an emergency ruling by the Supreme Court to allow publication of the Pentagon Papers.

It is during the early months of 2000 that the government will be taking the temperature of society on this case, and making the decision of how much they will be forced to give ground.

**OUR MOVEMENT FOR MUMIA HAS ACHIEVED MUCH** over the last year. The Oakland teach-ins, the Rage Against the Machine concerts, the N.Y. Town Hall Rally, the West Coast Longshoremen's work stoppage, the April 24 mobilizations, the Evergreen State College commencement address, 95 arrested in civil disobedience at the Liberty Bell, Mumia 911, and Mumia Awareness Week, have set Mumia's case before millions. But let us not kid ourselves. We still need to build the broadest movement possible in order to counter an opposition that remains powerful, dangerous, well-organized and poised to kill Mumia.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME** in the movement to stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal. If you are someone who is profoundly disturbed over what happened to Mumia in the courts, and are worried what will happen if this is allowed to stand as precedent, then we need your voice. If you are someone whose principal issue is the death penalty itself, then the fight is here. If you are someone who is convinced of Mumia's innocence, then don't let a miscarriage of justice take place. If you are someone concerned about the suppression of dissenting voices, then help make Mumia's voice heard.

**EVERYONE CAN TAKE**

**ACTION.** Already planned are dozens of programs, actions, newspaper ads, and mobilizations to give collective voice to our cry for justice. The actions of every individual count. Mumia's lawyer, Leonard Weinglass, has already received over 15,000 letters to Judge Yohn on Mumia's behalf. Couldn't we collect 100,000 such letters by the time of the hearing? Virtually everyone has access to some professional or social grouping. Can't we all take this case in our schools, churches, professional associations, unions, and even our friends and families. Can't we take advantage of public events and commemorations such as the Martin Luther King weekend to raise Mumia's case? Can't we poster Mumia's image everywhere? With the year 2000 being an election year, shouldn't the candidates be hounded with this issue. Pennsylvania Governor Ridge has now signed 179 death warrants, 106 for African-Americans in a state that is 10% Black. Shouldn't he be branded everywhere as "governor Death?"

**WE ALL HAVE MUCH AT STAKE** in preserving Mumia's life and voice. The movement for Mumia has become a focus for many other movements that are working to shake our peoples free from patterns of oppression that ravage us today: the epidemic of police brutality concentrated in Black and Latino communities; the burgeoning prison-industrial complex; the ready-use of a death penalty that is likely to place nearly 4,000 people on death row by the end of the year 2000.

We dare not lose Mumia's voice and life. Every day of our movement's past work has been indispensable to where we are now in the struggle to save Mumia. The next few months, leading up to the Federal District court's decision on an evidentiary hearing and whether Sabo's record will be allowed to stand, must feature our best efforts, our strongest measures, our most creative energies.

## Black Farmers:

### The Struggle Continues

By Dr. Ridgely A. Mu'min Muhammad

**THE FARMER** — They came in the rain. They came with "guns" (pictures of guns). Over 100 Black farmers and supporters weathered a pouring rainstorm and chilly temperatures to make a statement in front of the White House on December 13, 1999. Then they took that word and carried those "guns" to the MLK March and Rally in Atlanta on January 17, 2000.

The group, including a dozen white farmers, and two mules — named "Struggle" and "Forty Acres" — was protesting three years of inaction by U.S. President Clinton, even in the face of a victory by the farmers in a class action lawsuit.

After a year of protests which began Dec. 12, 1996, President Clinton promised members of the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA) and the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association (BFAA) that he would terminate several officials in farm service agencies within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, according to NBFA President John Boyd. Dr. Ridgely Muhammad, along with other protesters, carried posters drawn and cut in the form of "guns" to highlight the hollowness of Mr. Clinton's words.

After being confronted by police and undercover agents about the significance of the "gun" posters, Dr. Muhammad explained that a white USDA employee was found guilty of carrying a loaded gun to his office, which he used to intimidate Black farmers seeking information about USDA programs and loans. His punishment was a one day suspension with pay. "So since they can bring guns to work, we thought that we would bring posters of guns to the White House," he said. "We wanted to emphasize that the same people, attitudes and procedures that the Black farmers sued the government over will be awaiting them when they go back to deal with the USDA as Black farmers. Nothing has changed," added the farmer from Georgia.

"Black farmers are still getting the short end of the stick and being denied justice and due compensation for the discriminatory and racist actions taken against them by USDA agents who have caused more than 13 million acres of land to be stolen from them," said Mr. Boyd.

Despite their victory in Pigford vs. Glickman class action lawsuit, the situation for Black farmers has turned out to be a "nightmare," said BFAA President Gary Grant.

Almost a year has passed since Judge Paul Friedman signed a prelimi-

Major Winter-Spring Events for Mumia: January—Amnesty International publishes pamphlet on the Mumia case

Jan 12—union delegation from Europe in Washington, DC

Jan 15-17—MLK commemorations; bring Mumia into these

February 18-19—the National Emergency Conference for Mumia

Week of February 23—annual national student/youth day for Mumia

February 28—Civil Disobedience action in Washington and San Francisco

February-March—Educators for Mumia ad in the New York Times

April 1-8—Mumia Awareness Week, tied to anniversary of MLK assassination

April—publication of Mumia's new book "All Things Censored"

April 29—Rosenberg Fund for Children program in Berkeley; Mumia component

Day of Mumia's first court appearance—Mass convergence on Philadelphia

Many of these events provide the opportunity for teach-ins, forums, video showings, special collections for the legal defense, car caravans, mass posterings and distribution of leaflets.





# YOUTH ON THE MOVE

## 2Pac Amaru Shakur One Nation Conference

### From the Internet

**OAKLAND** — The 2Pac Amaru Shakur One Nation conference that was held Saturday, Dec 4th, at McClymonds High School in West Oakland was a beautiful thing. The community came out in force, as there were several workshops presented that made it worth attending.

One highlight was an unreleased film project that Pac participated in when he was 17. His manager, Leila Steinberg, explained that 10 years ago 2Pac partook in a film project where the ideas and perspective of several young people would be captured on tape and would be revisited 10 years later to see how they had changed. Out of all the participants, 2Pac was the only one who never made it to the 10 year anniversary.

However, the words he spoke were so moving and in many ways prophetic. He addressed an array of issues ranging from ways to change the educational system, to dealing with homelessness, to forming a new Black Panther Party to combat skin heads who lived near his home in Marin City. The film left a lot of people really missing Pac and understanding just how intelligent and forthright he really was. One can only imagine what sort of things he could've accomplished had he still been around.

On the topic of education, 2Pac spoke eloquently about the types of things that make it difficult for a lot of inner city youth to learn. He suggested that everyone be required to take classes that cover the basics: reading, writing and arithmetic. He emphasized the fact that he not only enjoyed reading but that it was a practical skill to have mastered.

While he spoke about the practicality of people his age [17 at that time] having the three Rs mastered, he noted that the school curriculum should be designed to address and deal with social issues and concerns that are going on in people's day to day struggles. For example, he felt that in his high school, MT Tamalpais, that there should've been classes that offered a realistic approach to money and economics, sex education, drugs, racism and police brutality.

He summarized that these are issues people have to deal with everyday yet they are never really discussed in schools in a way that makes sense to youth. He noted that the type of clinical approach often imparted by teachers, when they did touch upon these topics, left people feeling confused and turned off.

Instead of being required to take a foreign language, 2Pac suggested that youth be given classes on how to



2PAC's thoughts from 10 years ago could have been spoken today.

understand political double talk. He questioned the usefulness of someone in the hood having to learn German while these same individuals could not understand the type of talk his local politician uses when explaining why he did not keep a promise he made to the community. He wanted classes that would teach youth how to break down and really understand the system. As Pac rattled off his suggestion, one could hear many of the youth in the audience clapping and nodding their heads in agreement.

2Pac brought his points home when he talked about how the educational system was out of date. He noted that it seemed like adults were concerned with having him and other students do 'busy work' just for the sake of keeping them occupied. He talked about how many parents saw school as a place to drop their kids off like a day care center, and that it was disappointing that they remained uninvolved. Adults he noted, weren't prepared and up to the challenge of making education relevant for the kid about to enter into the 1990s and later 21st century.

Pac was also candid when he spoke about his own participation in class. He noted that he found school to be boring and often times he would do things to try and stir things up. He wanted to break the routine he noted.

Hearing Pac speak about the role of adults and how they see young people as an afterthought by way of their actions, really struck cords in the audience. He spoke at length about the relationship he had with his mother and how she

always encouraged him to be truthful no matter what the cost. He talked about how he was able to talk to his mom about things like sex and drugs and get honest answers. He talked about how his friends used to come talk to his mom because their own parents would not engage in such discussions.

He noted that by not speaking to their kids, the youth are left to find answers in the streets. 2Pac also talked about taking responsibility for the types of choices you make in life, and he was critical of some of his mother's choices. For example he questioned the wisdom behind her decision to move their family from New York City to Baltimore where at that time it had the highest rate of teen pregnancy, teen suicide, AIDS cases and teen violence in the entire country. 2Pac said he found himself placed in a sea of ignorance and felt like an outsider while living there.

He also felt inspired to try and do some things to change the conditions and hence he made attempts to start campaigns that addressed his concerns. He said he hated feeling helpless and overwhelmed about conditions affecting him.

In this film, 2Pac spoke about the legacy of living 8 of his 17 years under (u.s.) President Ronald Reagan. He spoke in depth about the types of miserable conditions his presidency spawned within the inner city. He was hoping that someone like Massachusetts Governor Dukakis or Jesse Jackson would be able to be elected

and correct some of the wrongs.

Pac noted how under Reagan there was a dramatic increase in homelessness and he suggested that Ronald Reagan could really set the tone to ending it if he opened up the White House and let some of the homeless live in the 1000 plus unoccupied rooms that existed there. 2Pac said he was puzzled as to how there could be homelessness in Washington DC when the president lives in a place with so many rooms.

He noted that Reagan would've benefited by having the homeless live under his roof because they might be able to offer him some practical advice for solving some problems. They could give him a street perspective on certain situations. Pac's candidness and suggestions left the interviewers momentarily speechless.

There were so many other things 2Pac covered; unfortunately we weren't allowed to tape or get copies of the film. The people who control 2Pac's estate won't allow this film out. An exception was made for the conference. I was surprised to learn that 2Pac's mom, Afeni, does not have final say so on how 2Pac's estate is administered. As it was explained to me there is still a lot of unfinished business that needs to be tended to before she is finally given full control. I'm not up on all the particulars but apparently when one dies and all their affairs aren't in order, it can be an absolute nightmare for the family members left behind. It was explained that it took two years of



## 2PAC

continued from page 18

cutting through legal red tape to get 2Pac's recently released book of poetry published.

In any case if one gets a chance to ever see this film, please do so. No matter what one may think of 2Pac and all the controversy that later befell his life, this film is absolutely incredible and should be required in all schools for both youth and parents to see. It bridges the generation gap. Even though 2Pac dropped his words 10 years ago, his remarks were representing the sentiments of many of the youth in attendance at the conference.

The other highlight of the 2Pac Conference that really impacted people was the workshop put together by 2Pac's Godfather, Geronimo ji jaga Pratt. He is the former Black Panther who was imprisoned for 27 years for a crime he didn't do. He brought together a panel of former Black Panthers and activists from the 60s and 70s. Many of these guys had been to prison for long periods of time for their involvement in the Panther Party.

They shared with the audience their upbringing and let the youth they were addressing know that they too came from the hood. Many were former gang members or wayward youth who tried to get themselves together and change the system to bring about better tomorrows.

They talked at length about the reasons why one should not 'set trip'. They talked about how the Panthers attempted to politicize many of the old street gangs and get them to rechannel their energies to dealing with a common enemy of oppression.

You had brothas from LA who talked about how the old street gangs buried the hatchet and came together after the Watts Riots of 1965 with the intentions of doing good within the community. They spoke about the strong alliances and connections the Black and Latino community had on the west coast. It was really deep.

They talked about political prisoners and they talked about the types of attempts that were made by the FBI under director J. Edgar Hoover to undermine and break up that unity. They talked about today's Hip Hop generation and what sort of steps one should consider to leverage power. They encouraged the youth to learn from past mistakes and to not be afraid to become leaders. They made it a point to let the audience know that when they had joined the Black Panther Party, many of them were only 18 or 19 years old.

All these brothas and sistas who spoke came from the heart to the point of being moved to tears. It was truly one of the most powerful workshops I had ever attended. I think the message from all those in that room was felt and heard loud and clear. If there was any reason to attend the 2Pac Conference it was just to hear the old Panthers speak to the youth.

# A Failed Justice System

By Abayomi Azikiwe, PANW

## Correspondent

PONTIAC—Rejecting the new law that allows children to be tried as adults in the state of Michigan, a judge in the Oakland County Court sentenced Nathaniel Abraham, now 13-years-old, as a juvenile after reading a long opinion on the failure of the juvenile justice system in the state and how the present law on prosecuting youth as criminal adults in less than just under the prevailing legal system.

Judge Moore ordered that Nathaniel, who was 11-years-old when he was arrested and charged with the murder of 18-year-old Ronnie Green, be held in a juvenile detention facility until he is 21. Defense attorney for the child, Jeffrey Fieger, declared that he would appeal the sentence based on the poor quality of the prosecution's case and the racial bias involved in the decision to place a now 13-year-old African-American youth on trial for a capital offense.

Nathaniel was convicted by a majority white jury in November of the crime of second-degree murder. Abraham was known as a troubled youth who had been diagnosed by the public school system as emotionally impaired at the age of 7. He was placed in a special education program and was denied the necessary therapeutic intervention by the state of Michigan. Judge Moore in his decision related the failure of the system to provide assistance to the family of Nathaniel Abraham, whose mother had made repeated request for intervention.

Fieger, the defense attorney, ques-



13 yearold Nathaniel Abraham

tioned the evidence in the prosecution's case and said that what took place was a travesty of justice. The case drew national and international attention. Activist such as Roger Wareham of the December 12th Movement in New York and Erica Ford of "The Code" attended the sentencing hearing, where a demonstration of several hundred people took place outside the courtroom in Pontiac. Dozens also lined the hallways outside the courtroom since admission to the proceeding were highly restricted.

"I wish the press of this state would quit mimicking the prosecutor's false

statements," said defense attorney for Nathaniel, Jeffrey Fieger. "The fact of the matter is that Nathaniel is not guilty of murder; he was a child playing with a gun," Fieger continued. "No one can prove beyond a reasonable doubt that this child intentionally killed someone; it didn't happen that way. It was no accident that the prosecution went after this child. This child was a symbol for this prosecutor. The symbol that white america wants to attach to the so-called predator youth—the young, poor African-american male. So that they can fill up their youth prisons," Fieger stated.

## LYNCHING 2000 MILLENIUM STYLE

By Roger Wareham

I was in Pontiac...I covered the trial, the verdict and now I am preparing an analysis of the sentencing for our readers. Most of the reactions are based on the sensation of the sentencing. That is exactly what White Supremacy needs for us to do. He was convicted without evidence.

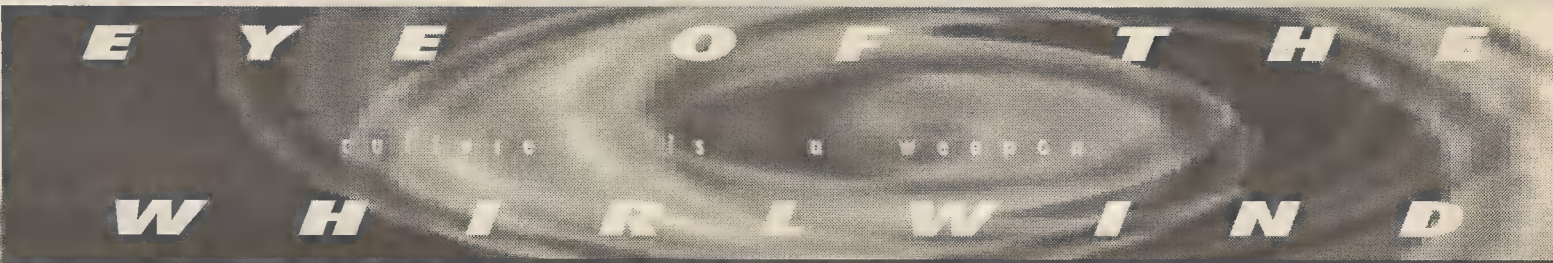
Never was there any admission or proof of Nathaniel firing the weapon that killed Ronnie Greene. The trial never proved the shot came from the rifle he was accused of playing with. Ballistic evidence was inconclusive. Entered into the trial record was the fact that an expert Olympian champion marksman tested the rifle at the distance from which Nathaniel theoretically should have been and test fired to see if the shot could be duplicated. HE COULD NOT DO IT—THE EXPERT TESTIFIED HE COULD NOT DO IT.

The trajectory of the bullet lodged in Ronnie Greene's skull was determined to have come from another direction, with a downward angle. The other person with Greene on the scene heard the shots (plural) from another direction.

Nathaniel was accused of having 22 run-ins with the law. An eleven year old with a six year-old mentality with no arrest record, no charges and no trial record prior to this incident. Do you know that the state of Michigan has no mental health funding or programs for challenged youth? What kind of rehabilitation will occur—especially since you have a child who was innocent of the murder from the start?

What is the Michigan State government really doing?





**Zayid Muhammad** One of the Principles of Unity of the New Afrikan Liberation Front is the advancing of the notion that "Culture is a weapon." The role of this column will be to help fulfill that function for NATION TIME. The column is looking to receive writings-prose, poetry, short fiction, interviews- from all over the Afrikan world. Young New Afrikan writers, social critics and cultural workers are strongly urged to contribute to the column. All submissions should be sent in final form to: The Eye of the Whirlwind, P.O.Box 25332, Newark, New Jersey 07101, Attention: Bro. Zayid Muhammad.

# Hurricane!

## The Movie/Transcending 'The Hard Knock Life'

### Towards A People's Review

By Bro. Zayid Muhammad

'Hurricane,' the Norman Jewison film in which Denzel Washington powerfully portrays outspoken former middleweight contender Rubin 'Hurricane' Carter, stealthily emerges from the shadows of the twilight of 20th century Hollywood as a film of surprising social value and as a potential instrument for social change.

Fidel Castro once said, and I am paraphrasing him here, that cinema is a powerful medium because it has the power to educate thousands of people at once.

This film actually goes beyond that by not only educating people to the question of race in the racist u.s. criminal justice system; it goes beyond that by inspiring its victims, its targets, to rise above it, as the real 'Hurricane' Carter actually did with his own brave but "hard knock life."

To sum up its plot, the film is based on the biography, 'Hurricane: The Miraculous Journey Of Rubin Carter' written by James Hirsch. It not only details the ordeal of Carter being framed for a triple homicide in 1966 and spending almost 20 years in prison; it chronicles his on the edge beginnings as a juvenile on the 'upsouth' streets of Paterson, N.J. and how his early ordeals with the criminal justice system, his outspoken, flamboyant and aggressive persona set the stage for that traumatic frame-up. On top of that, it also details how Carter transformed himself into a courageous, intellectually resourceful force for change through his tireless pursuit for justice.

The film has received broad critical acclaim in the film community, especially Denzel Washington's performance. He literally spent a year and a half training with a professional boxing trainer to give his portrayal an authentic feel. On the screen, he not only gives a good effort of that; in an hour and a half, he also gives you 30 years of Carter's volatile and charismatic personality in high dramatic fashion and quality.

It is not without its critics, however. But due to space limitations, we will not address others' criticisms here.



Carter's refusal to wear prison-issued clothes caused him to dress in clothes used in other parts of the pen. Here, in 1972 at Rahway State Prison, He is wearing a Barber's smock.

We will simply address ours.

Essentially, our criticism is that the film could have done more to capture the drama of Carter's era that served as the background for his own, and that there are some things that he did himself to contribute to that background.

Boldly embodying the defiant raw rage of the "field negro" in and out of the ring, Carter may have been the first to use the symbol of the black panther in the 1960's. He used it several years before the Lowndes County Freedom Party would use it in Alabama and before the better known Oakland-based Black Panther Party would ultimately use it. Carter used it on his robe going into ring. This could have been highlighted through the foreshadowing of its later emergence in the movement through those two courageous formations.

Carter's wedding, and the relationship most affected by his ordeal, actually took place on June 15, 1963, the same day that Medgar Evers was assassinated.

Evers' assassination was the first major assassination in our movement during that period, one that began the push of our people to self-defense instead of nonviolence, something Carter was very outspoken about. By simply using that same foreshadowing device, that time-marking event could have been included to more dramatically capture the political and social landscape of his frame-up just several years later.

Quiet as its kept, Carter, as a consequence of a fight he had in Apartheid South Africa, actually met a young and then unknown organizer named Stephen Bantu Biko, the same Stephen Biko who would later lead the Black Consciousness Movement which actually regenerated an aboveground movement against apartheid in the 1970s. Biko embraced Carter and educated him to the madness of apartheid. Carter, risking his own personal freedom, actually tried to funnel guns to the ANC from his own underground

connections on the streets...Peep that!...

Part of the 'Hurricane' Carter legend captured in part in this film is his boldly refusing to be treated like a 'criminal,' his 'non-participation' in his captivity. With painful effectiveness, the film captured his shunning of prison clothing, sampled the consequences he willfully faced and recreated his arduous but continued spiritual transformation. But it does not give you how Carter became a force within the prison justice movement himself as a consequence of his courageous and respected 'non-participation.'

Ironically, in one the few instances when Carter actually trusted his captors, he did so tragically at great personal cost. It cost him his eye in a botched surgery to repair a detached retina, an injury many fighters contend with. So in addition to losing two trials to all-white juries and racist prose-



# Hurricane

continued from page 20

ections, losing 20 years of his life, losing a marriage and a family, and nearly losing his life by narrowly escaping the death penalty, Carter also lost an eye...In exceptionally vulnerable conditions!...Certainly, that too had to be some heavy drama for such a strong figure to bear, especially under those conditions!

How about capturing that on the screen.

Among the things the film does is capture Carter's continued personal and spiritual transformation in prison once he's framed for those murders. Doing so, the film may have value for young men in the Black nation who are filling the prisons of this country up the yingyang, by showing them how they can transform their own personal realities if ever in captivity and perhaps even become personal forces for social change the way he did.

In fact, this aspect of the film, heightened by Carter narrowly escaping the death penalty, led to a special showing of the film at the United Nations, with Carter, now the executive director for the International Association For The Wrongly Accused, actually addressing the UN on the continued injustice of the death penalty, and speaking out for freedom fighters like Mumia and Leonard Peltier. (Ironically, this is one of the things that could've happened with Spike's 'joint' on Malcolm with the same Denzel Washington that just didn't, and that led to nothing but Lee getting paid and writing a new forward to The Autobiography.)

In addition, the film portrays two Black men in a positive light. It spins off a young Black man, battling illiteracy, initiating a relationship that leads to a historic and liberating act. That will happen in Hollywood, what Abbey Lincoln once called "amerikkka's white window on the world,"...oh about?...once or twice...in a hundred years, especially if you factor in that the film was done by a white producer. Instructively, the producer was Canadian, not amerikkkan.

Remember, the film spins off of Carter's actual relationship with a young brother from Brooklyn named Lesra (short for Lazarus, the legendary miracle figure of the New Testament) Martin, who while living in Canada, after just learning how to read at 14, comes across Carter's autobiography, reads it and is thoroughly angered and inspired to initiate the relationship that generates the critical support, the "internationalization" of the case in effect, that ultimately leads to Carter's release.

Perhaps the film's most important and at the same time insurgent moment is actually a bonding scene between two very courageous and masculine Black men. In the scene, Carter suggests to young Lesra, played with real raw flavor by Vicellous Reon Shannon, that there may have been something nearly prophetic about their meeting

each other, and tells him that hate put him in prison and that love was going to bust him out. Going completely against the grain of the maximum negative propaganda about angry Black men in general, and about this super-prototypical one in particular, Carter then reaches through his cell bars and very gently wipes the tears from Lesra's face. Lesra then responds with the fearless love of his most revolutionary ancestors and tells Carter that if love doesn't bust him out, he will.

Martin, now a lawyer in Canada who also addressed the UN with Carter, summed up the dual odyssey captured in the film this way: "This is a moment of triumph for the written word," he passionately exclaimed, recounting how reading 'The 16th Round,' Carter's autobiography, the first book he read at age 14, having been trapped by illiteracy in a Bushwick Brooklyn slum, so dramatically changed his life.

"It is also a moment of triumph for literacy," he finished.

Recalling my own transformation after stealing Malcolm's Autobiography in a drug transaction over 20 years ago, and reading it, I would agree.

But to be more specific and to further crystallize the social value that this flick has for our people, I will also say that the film not only represents the triumph of the written word and literacy, it particularly identifies the role of our tradition in that process. Carter modeled his autobiography after Malcolm's. Both represent the 20th century continuum of our still under-appreciated tradition...the tradition of our revolutionary slave narrative!

So as Assata said herself in her autobiography, her own contribution to the continuum of this tradition, we must 'carry on the tradition!'...All the way to freedom!...

# MASS CALL TO PROTEST IMF/WB

By Matthew Arnison

A powerful movement for economic and human rights and fair trade had its coming-out party at the WTO meetings in Seattle. A range of forces who value human and ecological dignity over corporate profits and trickle-down economics came together there. They challenged one of the most insidious tools of unaccountable profit-driven rule, the World Trade Organization, and scored an important series of victories against some daunting odds.

In April, the struggle continues in Washington, DC — the very heart of political and institutional control over the global economy: the U.S. Treasury, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. They are the chief instruments used by political and corporate elites to create today's unjust, destructive global economic order. The World Bank and the IMF have been quietly writing the rules that keep the world safe for multinational corporations while economically depriving billions around the world.

Your presence in Washington is needed! The finance ministers and international bureaucrats who shape the world economy to make the rich richer and the poor poorer need to know that Seattle was not just a bump on their road to global domination. What was asserted at the WTO must be repeated to the rulers of the global economy. We must make clear, again, that the peoples' movements of the world, will

not stand idly by while those holding power continue to impoverish and oppress the majority of the world's peoples and ravage the earth's environment and resources while enriching themselves and corporations.

Activists in the United States must insist — firmly and consistently, until the system is changed — that decisions about the fate of the planet and its peoples must not be made behind closed doors.

The IMF and World Bank are in many ways the "parents" of the WTO; today, they form an "unholy trinity" to preserve corporate power and constrain the rights and opportunities of the majority of the world's people. Because of that, many of the groups that helped organize the victories in Seattle are already preparing for days of protest, education, training, and direct action during the week of April 9-16 in Washington.

The week begins on Sunday, April 9th, with a Jubilee 2000/USA mobilization for cancellation of the debts of African, Latin American, Asia-Pacific, and Caribbean countries, and continuing with teach-ins and trainings on the global economy. It will culminate with a MASSIVE RALLY AT IMF HEADQUARTERS ON SUNDAY, APRIL 16TH.

For more information, contact the 50 Years is Enough Network (Washington DC) at 202-IMF-BANK or Global Exchange (San Francisco) at 415-558-9486, x. 254

## B E L I E V E I N U S

We need you to believe in us  
We have become a nation behind the walls  
Our experiences are different, our struggles are many  
Souljahs filled by the blood of self-determination  
But none of this means anything if you don't believe in us . . .

We are being targeted for challenging authority  
Self-government, land, and independence is our  
Nation and people's first priority  
But none of this means anything if you don't  
Believe in us . . .

Our voices are screaming to be heard by you  
Through our poetry, art, writings to you  
Trying to give an inside look into what we face  
Exposing the racist politics that exist  
But none of this means anything if you don't believe in us.

Just knowing you support our fight  
It helps to relieve the pressures of strife  
Our struggle needs to be encouraged by all  
Who share in the same way of life  
Please believe in us . . .

KHALFANI X. KHALDUN



## In the Belly of the Beast

### RASTAFARI IN THE VIRGINIA PRISON SYSTEM

**RICHMOND** — Since 1970, the number of people incarcerated has risen ten-fold—from 200,000 to 2 million. A disproportionate number of those who have fallen prey to the American prison industry are [New Africans] — among them Rastafari. Recently, the Virginia Department of Prisons has instituted a policy designed to further denigrate those in the belly of the beast — the trimming of hair and beards of all prisoners, ostensibly for security reasons.

The policy was carried out statewide as of December 15, 1999, affecting various inmates—including Rastafari and Native Americans — who claimed the right to wear their hair and beards uncut for religious reasons. D.C. inmates housed in Virginia prisons were spared this indignity due to a temporary restraining order filed by U.S. District Judge Henry H. Kennedy. Kennedy's order blocked Virginia officials from enforcing the policy against any D.C. inmates who raised objections on religious grounds.

Prior to the December 15th deadline, Ras Maurice Clarke, Sister Akua Bell, and Ras Paulos of the I-niversal Nyabinghi Order were in communication with incarcerated brethren as well as prison officials in an attempt to have the religious rights of inmates recognized.

Ras Moses Davis, of the Lawrenceville Correctional Facility, explained that non-compliance with the grooming policy would result in the prisoner being trimmed by force and losing any "good time" accumulated toward early release.

According to Rebecca Greenberg, a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the 4th U.S.

Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond — which holds jurisdiction in Virginia — does not recognize Rastafari as a religion (even though Rastafari has been so recognized in other U.S. Circuit Courts as well as by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act signed into law in 1993 by U.S. President Clinton.)

"Sadly", states Ras Paulos, "I-n-I are unable to assist the other brethren in the Virginia Department of Prisons. However, the journey does not end on December 15th...No man should question the faith of others and no man can judge the ways of the Almighty."

The I-niversal Nyabinghi Order continues to be in contact with the Virginia Chapter of the ACLU and is now seeking to join with other mansions of Rastafari in order to pursue a class action suit against the Virginia Department of Prisons. Judge Kennedy, who issued the restraining order on behalf of the D.C. inmates, has scheduled another hearing to hear arguments on the religious freedom issues at stake.

# FREE

# MUMIA

## The Strong Black Woman is Dead

continued from page 15

called a bitch for being verbal, a dyke for being assertive and a whore for picking her own lovers. She died from never being enough of what men wanted, or being too much for the men she wanted. She died from being too black and died again for not being black enough. She died from castration every time somebody thought of her as only a woman, or treated her like less than a man.

She died from being misinformed about her mind, her body and the extent of her royal capabilities. She died from knees pressed too close together because respect was never part of the foreplay that was being shoved at her. She died from loneliness in birthing rooms and aloneness in abortion centers. She died of shock in court rooms where she sat, alone, watching her children being legally lynched. She died in

bathrooms with her veins busting open with self-hatred and neglect.

She died in her mind, fighting life, racism, and men, while her body was carted away and stashed in a human warehouse for the spiritually mutilated. And sometimes when she refused to die, when she just refused to give in, she was killed by the lethal images of blonde hair, blue eyes and flat butts, rejected to death by the O.J.s, the Quinceys, and the Poitiers.

Sometimes, she was stomped to death by racism and sexism, executed by hi-tech ignorance while she carried the family in her belly, the community on her head, and the race on her back!! The strong silent, s\*\*t-talking black woman is dead!!

Or is she still alive and kicking??

..... I know I am still here.

## A Life in the Balance

continued from page 10

had recently been fired. It was not determined, for instance, whether there was residue on his hands from firing a gun.

### Additional information and background

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of human rights. The organization is therefore calling for a new trial which should preclude the re-imposition of a death sentence.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, Black, was convicted and sentenced to death in July 1982 for the murder of white police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981.

He has consistently maintained his innocence.

Amnesty International can take no position on the guilt or innocence of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The organization has expressed concern, however, over the activities of a government counter-intelligence program which appeared to list Abu-Jamal among its targets. Amnesty International is also concerned that political statements attributed to him as a teenager were improperly used by the prosecution in its efforts to obtain a death sentence against him.

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## Message from Assata On the Occasion of Sundiata Acoli's 63rd Birthday

**Happy Birthday Sundiata!**  
**Happy Birthday Sundiata!**  
**Happy Birthday Sundiata!**

I want so much for Sundiata Acoli to have a Happy Birthday. I want so much for Sundiata to know how much he is loved and respected. I want him to know how much he is appreciated by revolutionaries all over the world. I want Sundiata to know how much he is cherished by African people, not only in the Americas, but all over the Diaspora. I want him to know how much we admire his strength, his courage, his kindness and compassion. Sundiata loves freedom and we must struggle for the life and freedom of Sundiata. Sundiata has struggled for the life and the freedom of us all.

We wish Sundiata a happy birthday, but we know full well that Sundiata is still in prison. Happy Birthday in prison, means trying to be happy as possible in an unhappy reality. Sundiata has suffered more than 26 years of injustice, and that is 26 years too many. Sundiata has spent more than 26 birthdays in prison and that is 26 birthdays too many. We all know what Sundiata wants for his birthday — Sundiata wants freedom. We all know what Sundiata needs for his birthday — Sundiata needs freedom. We all know what Sundiata deserves for his birthday — Sundiata deserves freedom! We cannot give Sundiata the gift he deserves today, but we can give him the next best thing. We can give him a solemn promise; we can give him a sacred pledge. We can promise that we will work our fingers to the bone; that we will fight tooth and nail; that we will move heaven and earth, to see that this is the last birthday he will spend in prison.

We must get off the defensive and get on the offensive. We must spread the campaign to free Sundiata into the schools, into the churches, into offices, into factories, into every neighborhood where freedom lovers live. We must spread the campaign to free Sundiata all over the world. We must spread the campaign to free Sundiata into every aspect of our lives.

**We can promise that  
we will work our fin-  
gers to the bone; that  
we will fight tooth  
and nail; that we will  
move heaven and  
earth, to see that this  
is the last birthday he  
will spend in prison.**

This is a brand new century and we need a brand new spirit and a brand new style. I make a special appeal to young people. I am not only asking you to work hard to free all political prisoners, I am asking you to party hard to free all Political Prisoners. I am asking you to raise your voices wherever you go and to chant, to rap, to sing for the liberation of Sundiata Acoli and all Political Prisoners. I am asking you to bring the spirit of freedom to discos, to nightclubs, to house parties, wherever young people gather. While you are partying and having fun, I ask you to think of political prisoners, and when you're getting down to the music I ask you to chant "Free Sundiata," I want you to chant "Free Mumia," "Free Leonard Peltier" and so on. I want you to chant the names of every political prisoner still behind the walls.

We must make the liberation of political prisoners a number one priority. We must make our voices heard. We must let this government know that we're tired of oppression, we're tired of repression and we want our freedom fighters free. We must create the conditions that will insure that next year Sundiata will be able to spend his birthday with his friends and his loved ones, and to be present at his birthday party.

**FREE SUNDIATA ACOLI!**  
**FREE MUMIA ABU JAMAL!**  
**FREE ALL**  
**POLITICAL PRISONERS!**

AssataShakur Havana, Cuba  
January 15, 2000

(ed. note: *The Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign is presently circulating a CALL To Release Sundiata. To obtain copies of the Call and to find out what else you can do for the freedom of Sun-*

*diata Acoli, contact the Sundiata Freedom Campaign today at the following address:*

Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign  
655 Fulton Street, Box 123  
Brooklyn, NY 11217  
e-Mail: [SAParole@aol.com](mailto:SAParole@aol.com)

## Filthy Philly Politics

The upcoming Republican convention in Philadelphia will show us how ruthless Philadelphia's police commissioner John Timoney is. John Timoney is a cop that mayor Edward G. Rendell recruited from New York City. John Timoney has made remarks to Philadelphia Magazine indicating that he doesn't have a problem sticking a plunger up someone's a....

The Philadelphia Daily News reported in early December that Philadelphia cops went to Seattle to learn how to deal with protesters that will descend on Philadelphia for the Republican convention, July 29-Aug. 3rd. It (the Daily News) reported that they (the cops) are ready. There's an internal war being waged within the police force in Philadelphia. The police union chief was quoted as calling the police commissioner 'a drunken Irish carpet bagger'. That was said in response to a remark made by the commissioner himself, according to the Daily News. Despite their differences, I am almost positive that they will unite to stomp on peaceful protesters.

And as we've learned from Philadelphia's history, mayor Wilson Goode didn't stop the MOVE massacre/bombing; I'm almost certain that the new mayor, John F. Street, who was literally put in office, won't try to prevent the upcoming massacre. I was invited by the Philadelphia Daily News to attend one of the mayoral debates at the Hyatt Hotel in Center City. I saw first hand that rich caucasians in Philadelphia weren't about letting a Black man run this city. There was an all out effort in the end by the powers that be to help Street win the election. Street was declared a winner before all the votes were counted. The powers that be want the public to believe that they (the democrats) were trying to avoid a defeat in 50 years but the real reason is that they're about to make Mr. Street a fall guy for an injustice that they are about to commit.

Here are some of police commissioner John Timoney's remarks: 'We have cops that are fat f---, and we have cops who don't have the strength to pull the triggers on the guns. And we can't get rid of them.. The unions here

got a lot of power! (Philadelphia Magazine, February 1999, Page 110.) Here's his view of himself: 'I'm the best police commissioner in the country right now. I know it sounds arrogant, but I really believe that. (Philadelphia Magazine, Feb. 1999 page 61.) Here's his view of the judicial system: 'The D.A. has been trained and the judge has been trained how to play the game, and the defense attorney has been trained. The only ones who haven't been trained are cops, so it isn't a fair game, I mean, you should have some exposure to understand that it isn't all Perry Mason, that it isn't the search for truth, that it's a game.' (Philadelphia Inquirer, August 29, 1999, Page B-2).

By Timoney's remarks, one can tell that Philadelphia is ready to rumble, are we?

All power to the people.  
Ernst Ford

## O! Ye of little faith!

There is only one solution to this weak web we continue to weave as a people. Ever since Booker T. Washington, so called black leaders have been trying to assimilate, acculturate, integrate our people into the good graces of white people. Is there no balm in Gilead for the black man, to heal him from this psychotic nightmare. Yes! there is a balm in Gilead, and it's called, REPARATIONS.

If we would put as much energy into making the demand for Reparations as we do for all of these other little maneuvers, our problems would vanish overnight. The National Coalition Of Blacks For Reparations In America (N'COBRA) has been begging for help from some of these same people, but the help has been minimal at best. Congressman John Conyers has been a big help by introducing a bill to spark some interest, but the only interest it seem to spark flickers out in the committee room. I believe if we could put our collective heads together in a spirit of collective works and responsibility, with faith in the righteousness of our struggle, that little silver we are trying to get from downtown on wall street would look like a hill of dust when compared to the mountain of precious metals(or whatever form we choose) we will receive from the world.

The Reparations movement is alive and well, You just need to join it

Asante Sana  
Rev. Carlton "Bashiri" White  
N'COBRA's Southwest Regional Representative

## Nuh Washington

continued from BACK page

### THIS FROM NUH:

Having read the letter [about me] in last week's San Francisco Bay View, first thing I must say is that words are like arrows — once you send them forth, you can't call them back. Unfortunately, there were a few things in the

letter that may have compromised my chance of winning clemency.

First, a petition must be filed. I have already been denied a terminal release. My doctor here at the hospital had put me in [for terminal release] and was told by the people in Albany that because of the nature of my case, I did

not fit the criteria.

My attorney, Elizabeth Fink, who is my sole representative along with Robert Boyle, suggested that we still have an option in a petition for clemency, which we discussed, and we formulated a strategy on how to go about it. While I respect and appreciate the effort of people to help me, they should contact either myself or my attorneys to find out how I wish to approach these matters.

And I am lucid and able to make decisions. Therefore, until that time, if it does come, I will be making deci-

sions along with my attorneys. If at some point in time I am unable to make decisions, then I have a living will where my attorneys, Liz Fink and Robert Boyle, will make decisions for me.

Mostly, I appreciate the thoughts and letters from people. They've been a source of inspiration and strength.

Still Struggling,  
Nuh



# Nuh Washington

A lot of people are extremely concerned about what is happening with Albert Nuh Washington, especially his fellow comrades/political prisoners inside the walls. Nuh is well loved and respected by his comrades and friends all over the world, both inside and outside of prison. In this time there is a growing feeling of helplessness and people want to know what they can do. Recently an article appeared in the San Francisco Bayview that resulted from this feeling of helplessness. Nuh subscribes to this newspaper and he/along with the wife of Herman Bell responds to this article below:

## GREETINGS:

I am a close friend of New York 3 political prisoner Nuh Washington, who is currently battling liver cancer in the prison hospital in Comstock, NY. I want to just add a few comments re: Bro Jahahara's column containing a letter from Sundiata Acoli calling for Nuh's release. Of course, everyone wants to push for Nuh's release, but at this point in time, his petition for clemency has not yet been filed. So it would make more sense to send letters once that petition has been filed. So please, keep in touch with Attorney Joan Gibbs at the e-mail address Sundiata listed [Ed.note: see Nuh's statement below], and also, the San Francisco Bayview newspaper will be informed just as soon as the petition has been filed. Also, re: collecting

money for a headstone for Nuh, please don't think this is premature or insensitive. In the past, another beloved political prisoner comrade died who was also a Muslim, and there were no funds to ensure a proper Muslim funeral and burial for him. So because Nuh is suffering from a very serious, life-threatening disease, folks are doing their best to make sure his wishes and those of his family will be greatly respected, in the event of his passing.

However, it is very important for everyone to realize that Nuh is and always has been a fighter - that he is presently fighting this liver cancer each day of his life. Nuh and his Imam say, "The doctors say  $2+2=4$ , but if Allah wills it,  $2+2=8$ . So we can all send our best love and encouragement to him in his continuing struggle to survive by writing to him at the following address:

Albert Nuh Washington #77A1528  
Great Meadows  
Correctional Facility  
Box 51  
Comstock, NY 12821-0051

Please don't be expecting him to write back, but keep sending him your love and prayers every day

Sincerely,  
Nancy Jacot-Bell

please see NUH WASHINGTON on page 22



Albert 'Nuh' Washington - before he took ill.

## A Man Called "SHAKA"

Column Written 1/3/2000

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

On September 5th, 1999, the man born as Gary Graham marked his 36th year in life, and his 18th year in a Texas cage. Several years ago, the black death row prisoner changed his name to Shaka Sankofa, after the great founder of the Zulu Empire of southern Africa. For years, he has been fighting for his life, most recently against one of the most brutal killing states in America. Texas leads the nation in executions, spurred, at least in part, by the presidential aspirations of its Governor, George W. Bush.

Supporters from as diverse a grouping as the Pope, the Nation of Islam, and the national Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty have been critical of some aspects of his trial, and called for either clemency or a new trial. Sankofa's trial was marred by conflicting witnesses, ballistics evidence that cleared his weapon from the killing, and even alibi testimony placing him miles away from the crime scene, yet much of this wasn't brought out to the jury.

Five times Sankofa has faced the gallows and five times he has been granted last minute stays of execution.

What disturbs many observers is the provision of Texas law that disallows evidence of innocence that does not come within that state's narrow

time frame. Supporters of Sankofa have released a CD featuring music and spoken word to support his new trial efforts called "Let the Evidence be Heard."

In early September, 1999, the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, wrote to Texas Governor Bush, asking, on behalf of Pope John Paul II, that clemency be granted. The Nuncio wrote:

"The Holy Father prays that the life of Mr. Graham may be saved through the compassion and magnanimity of yourself, Mr. Governor, and through the Board of Pardons and Paroles. His Holiness counts on your authority to have a life spared by commuting this sentence with a gesture of mercy which would certainly contribute to the promotion of a culture of life and of non-violence in the freedom-loving society of the United States."

But even the appeal of a Pope may have to yield to an even Higher Power - the power of human political ambition. That was certainly the case as regards the late Karla Fae Tucker, whose remarkable rehabilitation was treated like a joke.

Shaka Sankofa has spent half of his life, not only in a cage, but under threat of death, despite considerable evidence of his innocence. From his perspective, the U.S. is many things, but "freedom-loving" it ain't.

## NEWS FROM THE JERICHO MOVEMENT

We found out this afternoon, December 17th, 1999 that Albert 'Nuh' Washington has cancer of the liver that has spread to his pelvic region. He is in the Albany County Medical Center in New York. He underwent his first radiation treatment today.

His medical care is proceeding well. The doctors are in fact keeping him apprized of what his situation is and what treatments are being utilized consistently and he is satisfied with the course of treatment. Dr. Barbara Zeller from the Jericho Medical Project has been in consultation with other doctors on his case also.

Right now we have to be concerned about Nuh's state of mind, which means we understand that a big part of beating cancer is keeping positive thoughts and keeping your spirits up. We need you to help us with that by writing and sending cards and letters to Nuh. He cannot receive visits while he's in the hospital except for his immediate family. His mother is elderly and his father is deceased. So we must send cards and letters.

He also needs money to keep his television on in the hospital and for other things.

Send cards, letters and postal money orders to:  
Albert 'Nuh' Washington #77A1528  
Great Meadows Correctional Facility  
Box 51  
Comstock, NY 12821